

The Power of Love



THE POWER OF LOVE

A STUDY MANUAL ADAPTED FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL USE
AND FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

Edited and Compiled by
THE PEACE COMMITTEE
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of North America

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O POWER OF LOVE, ALL ELSE TRANSCENDING

O Power of love, all else transcending,
In Jesus present evermore,
We worship Thee, in homage bending,
Thy name to honor and adore:
Yea, let my soul, in deep devotion,
Bathe in love's mighty boundless ocean.

Thou art my rest, no earthly treasure
Can satisfy my yearning heart,
And naught can give to me the pleasure
I find in Thee, my chosen part;
Thy love, so tender, so possessing,
Is joy to me, and every blessing.

To Thee my heart and life be given;
Thou art in truth my highest Good;
For me Thy sacred side was riven,
For me was shed Thy precious blood.
O Thou who art the world's salvation,
Be Thine my love and adoration.

Foreword

The most terrible and most devastating war in history has come to a close. Many are asking: What have we gained by it? Although we won the war, we stand in grave danger of losing the peace. We were given promise of freedom from fear, but actually there are more people living in fear than ever before. Freedom from want is only a dream to millions, while in Europe and Asia there are more people facing starvation than live in the entire United States. Will we ever learn to live peaceably together? There is only one way: by following the Prince of Peace.

In order to follow the Prince of Peace with greater devotion, the Peace Committee of the General Conference decided to help the churches of our Conference place a greater emphasis on the teaching of the principles of peace as found in the New Testament. Toward this they agreed to prepare this booklet. Four men were asked to write on the following subjects:

Rev. Walter H. Dyck: "The Scriptural Basis of Our Faith"

Dr. C. Henry Smith: "The Historical Background"

Dr. J. Winfield Fretz: "Our Peace Witness During World War II"

Rev. Russel Mast: "Living the Peace Testimony"

We appreciate greatly the work of the authors, and we trust that their efforts will bear much fruit.

The booklet is prepared for use as a Sunday School Quarterly; there are twelve lessons, three in each of the four sections. Sunday Schools who wish to use this booklet for study during one quarter of the year are en-

couraged to do so. The booklet is prepared for young people, having in mind especially those of high school age and older. There is no reason why it cannot be used by other age groups, and for purposes other than Sunday School lesson studies. Young People's groups may want to use the materials for Sunday evening meetings; pastors may wish to use the booklet for mid-week prayer and study groups; retreat groups have already asked for the booklet to use part or all of the material for their curriculum.

Although the four parts comprise a complete whole, it will be possible to take parts of the book where time does not permit the more extensive study of the several sections. It is brief, and the writers did not aim to cover the subject matter exhaustively; it is written with the hope that it may be helpful in living the peace principles as Jesus taught them.

May it be helpful in learning to follow the Prince of Peace more whole-heartedly.

—Albert M. Gaeddert, Secretary
The Peace Committee

Introduction

"Religion," according to a brilliant writer, "is a citadel of hope built on the abyss of despair." I like this striking definition, because it applies so aptly to the situation in our own General Conference.

On the one hand, the statistical proof of radical compromise is quite frightening. Winfield Fretz received reports from every church in the conference. Alas, how far-reaching the breakdown of conviction! Whole districts with a tiny proportion of CPS; whole churches without even so much as a man in non-combatant service; widespread work at inflated wages in factories where bombs, tanks, airplanes, and accessories were built. After two hundred years' struggle for a decent, civilian alternative to military duty in the army, American Mennonites were unable or unwilling to use the victory of freedom which they have won. Back of all this is the clear warning of history: in Holland and Germany non-resistance was lost through slow but sure compromise like this. A glorious birthright was exchanged for a mess of pottage. If the parallel is ominous in Mennonite history, it is equally ominous in Biblical history where God's people also fell prey to worldliness and flabby conviction. From the calf-worship of Exodus to the seven churches of Revelation, backsliding is a sad part of the Lord's people. All this is the abyss of despair into which Mennonites may look at this time.

On the other hand, there are evidences of hope. Civilian Public Service for all of its trials and difficulties was a great triumph for the church as a whole. Mennonites of all branches helped each other in mutual faith. Hundreds of our young men have had a four-year course of study in basic Christian doctrines as taught by our church. Moreover, these men have caught a new vision of an awakened, dynamic program of evangelism and courageous witness to a fallen world. Delicate issues

have been raised by the confusion in the home churches. For these issues there is no satisfactory authoritarian, legislative answer. By almost common agreement, the answer is to come from a careful strengthening of the program of Christian nurture in which a true Biblical conviction of uncompromised love may grow.

Thus, this study book is a part of that vision for a more solid program of training. The fateful end of World War II on that sunny, summer day of August, 1945, found a blood-soaked earth crying out in revulsion. The most fiendish, ghoulish instrument of mass murder in all history had been unveiled in the atom bomb. One tiny bomb destroyed a large Japanese city of 300,000 people. What terrible blasphemy! A deep sense of doom has fallen across the earth. Will this Frankenstein monster be the means by which mankind destroys itself? No one can say. Man is an awful rebel and fool. But this we do know: **the blood of the super-efficient atomic bomb need not be on the hands of any child of God who takes Jesus Christ seriously!** God will surely watch over His righteous remnant which witnesses to the new-birth in His Anointed, the Son of God.

The Great Commission enjoins us to do three things: (1) Make disciples of all nations; (2) baptize the converts; (3) obey all of Christ's commandments. Non-resistance is one of Christ's most re-iterated commandments. Let us never fail to see it in the total Biblical economy of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Hence, let us put aside all mistakes and compromises of the past. Let us start afresh, using this study course as one of many new manifestations of an awakened, aroused, Spirit-filled Mennonite Church which will proclaim a glorious citadel of hope on the abyss of despair.

—Don. E. Smucker
Princeton, New Jersey

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CHAPTER I

The Scriptural Basis of Our Faith

THE NEED FOR A POWERFUL LOVE

Introduction

In the days of our youth we are thrilled at the thought of the days ahead. There are so many things we would like to see and try. If only we were through with our school work so that we might be able to get a "feel" of those things which others have done. You will, no doubt, also have said, "I just can't wait till I get that far. Why must time go so slowly?"

In view of the days in which we are living it is urgent that we think seriously about some of the things ahead. What if we are not prepared to meet life as it is?

Which way shall I go?

Living day by day is very much like taking a trip. We must know where we are going. We must study the map to make sure which road gets us there. We must also make sure what we will need on the way. We certainly do not want to be like the five young women who one day, on their way to a wedding feast (Matt. 25:1-13), became careless and later found that they were unprepared to go in. We do not want to be foolish! We cannot afford to be powerless! We wish to live strong, purposeful lives!

You, my friend, have a life. You are taking this trip; you are traveling along this road. But how can you make sure that it will be a successful trip? Too many are just traveling and not getting anywhere. We do not wish to

go in circles as those who are lost. We must ask someone who has taken this trip before. We must ask him, "Have you gone this way before? Have you a reliable set of maps? Where are the dangerous places?"

Choosing the guide

I wish to tell you frankly and make no apologies for it that there is only One who knows "**the Way**." He travelled it Himself. He knows the road—its beauties and its dangers. It is **Jesus Christ** who asks you not to make the trip unless He is your constant traveling-companion.

One day, when Jesus was nearing the end of His earthly journey, He went to be alone. On that day He prayed for you and me. He thought of the path stretching out before us. He was counting on each one of us to follow Him. These were His words: "I pray not for the world: but for those whom thou hast given me . . . I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one" (John 17:9, 15 R.V.).

This Friend not only knows the way, but He is "**the way**"; He not only knows the truth, but He is "**the truth**"; He not only experienced life, but He is "**the life**" (John 14:6). Simply but firmly He says, "**No man cometh unto the Father but by me.**" Here is the Way and the Goal. To this, one of His followers, one who was a bosom-friend, adds: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever" (I John 2:17).

A reliable guide

I wish to emphasize from the beginning that we dare not enter upon life without a Friend and Guide whom one can trust, one who is absolutely reliable. Jesus is that Friend; the Word of God is that map; and the "will of God" is that goal. Apart from Jesus Christ, and our trust

in Him; apart from the Bible and a ready reference to it; and apart from a deep whole-hearted yearning to find the will of God and do it, our lives cannot be successful.

At one time during Jesus' ministry when many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him, Jesus said to the twelve, "**Will ye also go away?**" Simon Peter answered Him: "**Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God**" (John 6:66-69).

We, too, must **believe** and **be sure** that Jesus Christ is our Savior whom we can trust, no matter what happens. He must not only be **the** Savior of the world. He must be **my** Savior. It is this that makes Him a personal Savior and Guide. A guide can be ever so reliable, but if I hesitate to follow, then he is not "my Guide." We must yield ourselves wholly to Him. Otherwise, we will never know what "the power of love" really means. It is one thing to read about traveling in a book. It is quite another thing to experience it first hand. This is our privilege today!

A difficult path

But let us be careful lest we regard the choosing of Jesus Christ as a guide too lightly. Yes, there will be satisfaction in knowing that one is on the right path. But on the whole, it will be a life that demands real sacrifice. It will bring keen disappointments. You will not, as so many suppose, be popular with the world. It will mean walking as the Savior walked, accepting suffering as real heroes of the cross. The Apostle Peter reminds us that "even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, **that ye should follow His steps**: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who when He was reviled, reviled not again;

when He suffered, He threatened not. . . ." (I Peter 2:21-23).

Is that what it means to follow in "**His steps**"? Most certainly! Only real heroes can live that way. Our Bible tells many stories of men and women of old, "heroes of faith." (Read Hebrews, Chapter 11, carefully.) Each of the forty verses shows how a real faith in God prepared them to face life at its worst. Moses, for instance, chose rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (v. 25). Twenty to twenty-five hardships are listed in verses 33-38. Sometimes these saints were delivered; sometimes, instead, they were given patience to endure sufferings; sometimes they gave their lives, but always confident that they were in God's will.

Looking unto Jesus

In the first verses of the following chapter (Heb. 12:1-4) comes the appeal to us. I would suggest that you memorize them, repeat them daily, and rely upon them. Besides this "great cloud of witnesses," Jesus is presented as the supreme example for Christian living. A good motto for life is: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (v. 2). "The joy that was set before him" helped Him to endure the cross and despise the shame. Now He is at the right hand of God, the Father, in heaven.

Think of what Jesus endured! Let us "consider Him" (v. 3) lest we become weary and discouraged. Our Christian faith is costing us all too little. "**Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin**" (v. 4). Jesus chose to sweat drops of blood in Gethsemane; He willingly shed His blood upon the cross, all this in "striving against sin." In John 15:13 Jesus says very plainly, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

The way of the Cross

The way of love is the way of the cross. We may risk, or even give, a life to save the life of a father, mother, sister, or friend, whom we love. But Jesus gave His for those who did not love Him. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Of course, we cannot do for others what Jesus did on the Cross, but the question is this: Should you or I expect "easier sailing" on the voyage of life than Jesus did? Isn't He to be our Guide? Doesn't He know the real purpose of life? Doesn't He know what makes for real character, real Christlikeness? Since He has gone ahead, should we hesitate to follow? Yes, Jesus implied very much when He said, "**Follow me**" (Matt. 4:19). But notice that He added the words, "**And I will make you . . .**"; He enables us to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Him (Mark 8:34).

The purpose of these first chapters is to find what the Bible really teaches about God's method of dealing with evil. We sing the hymn, "O Pow'r of Love." But is love powerful enough to work in the kind of a world in which we are living now? Is it possible for us to love people of other nations? Can they be won by love?

Syria conquered by love

Many years ago the land of Israel was attacked by the Syrians. (Read II Kings 6:8-32.) Elisha, the prophet of God, warned the King of Israel of coming attacks. The Syrian king then found that Elisha had been informing the King of Israel of his secret plans. So he sent an army to Dothan to capture Elisha. When the servant saw the Syrian host, he became fearful, but Elisha prayed that the enemies might be smitten with blindness. He then led them into the city of Samaria, the capitol of Israel. The Lord then opened their eyes, and they realized that they were captives. The King of Israel then asked the

prophet, "Shall I smite them?" The answer was, "Thou shalt not smite them . . . set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their Master." The king then prepared a good meal for them. When they had eaten, he let them go home. The story ends with the words, "So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel."

But there are also many stories in our Bible in which it seems that God did not always physically protect His people from the attacks of the enemies. Was He unable to do so? Certainly not! Why, then, did He not always deliver the Israelites or the early Christians? Why was John the Baptist beheaded? Why was Stephen stoned to death? Why the many martyrs of that early period? Listen to the words of Jesus: "The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20). "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:39).

A record of failure

We cannot approach a study of either the Old or New Testaments without noting carefully the various ways God has used in trying to get people to do His will. Much of the Bible, especially large portions of the Old Testament, is a record of failure—men and women unwilling to follow God's call, and who thereby came into sorrowful experiences. Having chosen their own way, God was unable to bless them. These hard experiences often proved to be blessings in disguise for, brought to see the evil of their way, men again turned to the ways of the Lord.

When children rebel

God's method is clearly illustrated in many Christian homes today. Parents plainly tell their children just

what they feel will be the best for them. What happens when a child decides not to heed the counsel of the parents? Does that prove that the parents are wrong? What if the child persists in saying, "Yes, that may be better, but I still want it my own way!" Again, the parents try to convince the child of the folly of such a decision. The child comes back with a cold, "I don't care what you wish. I want my own way!" The parents, grieved but realizing that the child refuses to learn except by the hard way, finally give in and say, "Remember, we are convinced you are making a serious mistake, but you are old enough to make your own decision." Right along, they continue to hope and pray that the child will not follow its own willful way, that the lesson to be learned may only bring the child to see, before it is too late, the wisdom of their counsel.

God has always had similar heartaches with His wayward children. He does not change in His purpose toward mankind. He always loves them and wishes to win each one to a life of intimate fellowship with Him. With some He has had considerable success. With others He has never succeeded. He grants life eternal to all who heed Him. But His displeasure is upon those who refuse Him. Then He follows, in infinite grace, all who may still be won. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

God gave them their request

With these principles in mind, we turn to the Old Testament with its wars, its cruelty, and its bloodshed. It is difficult to explain all of God's leadings. Sometimes it seems that God asked men to do what in other cases He severely judged. God's character, we know, never changes. In early times He seems to have permitted un-

Christian methods to be used, but those were times of ignorance (Acts 17:30). There is a wide difference in the Bible, as we shall soon see, between what God wishes, and what He allows. The one is sometimes called, "His directive will," the other "His permissive will." The one expresses what God wants us to do. The other is what happens when God abandons men to their own willfulness. The first bears His reward; the latter, His judgment. Psalm 106:15 summarizes what happened to Israel whenever they chose their own way. It says that God **"gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."** They gained things of earth; but robbed their real selves. They fed their bodies, but starved their souls.

Would it not seem that if there had been a better, more powerful way of winning mankind than the power of love God would have used it? "God so loved the world that He gave . . ." (John 3:16). "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). God has always tried to show men His will, but always holds them responsible for deliberately sinning against His fuller revealed will.

In the next section we wish to show, particularly from the Old Testament, that "love" is a power which has proven itself to be "all else transcending." In Section 3 we wish to see "love" as being "In Jesus present evermore." Love is God's method. Love is our best method, too.

For thought and discussion

1. How can we be assured of Christ's presence with us at all times?
2. Why does God often permit Christians to suffer persecution?
3. What experience can you relate which shows "The Power of Love"?

4. Is there a difference between what God directs and what He permits?
5. Why doesn't God force people to do His will?

For further reading: Edward Yoder, **Must Christians Fight?**

THE POWER OF LOVE, ALL ELSE TRANSCENDING

Introduction

We love to sing, "O Pow'r of love, all else transcending" When we sing these words, we mean that the love of God is greater than any other power. Another poet says, "For the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind; and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind."

As we approach a study of the Old Testament, we must remember that "the love of God is broader" than the smallness of man's mind. Often we feel that we must understand all of God's leadings. This is beyond our human ability. God says: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9). This thought disturbs our pride.

God has a holy and just reason for all He does, even though His ways are often "past finding out" (Rom. 11:33). The "measure of man's mind" is very narrow. God cannot be understood merely by the little He has been able to do with mankind. As Rachel was once able to hide the idols of her father (Gen. 31:31-35) because they were so small, so we often limit the power of God by imagining Him to be no greater than what we have experienced Him to be. Our limited hearts and minds are God's and our own greatest hindrances.

What God intended

Rightly understood, both the Old and New Testaments are a divine record of God's dealings with mankind. God reveals His will by various types of leadings and commands. We must distinguish carefully between what God intends and what He endures because of man's willfulness. It is not always safe to follow the examples of Bible characters. The Holy Scriptures described fairly both the strong and weak points of the various men and women of sacred history. We want to learn what God intended to do with and for them, and take warning from their many failures. Jesus, the Son of God, as we shall see in the following chapter, is the One Character who never failed.

God always hates sin

God never intended for man to hate and kill man. God cannot be both a God of war and a God of peace. He says, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). (Read also Heb. 13:8 and James 1:17). God's dealings with mankind have the one purpose of winning them. God always hates sin. God always loves the sinner. God's holiness always condemns evil—hatred, jealousy, and bloodshed; God's mercy always calls men into fellowship with Himself. Let us then look at some of the experiences of the early characters of history.

Some chose hatred, others chose peace

Adam and **Eve** were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27). They were to have the choice between right and wrong. God's will for them was a life of constant fellowship in the sunshine of His love and understanding. God's heart was grieved when they disobeyed.

God's "power of love" won **Abel**, but God's love did not succeed in winning **Cain**. The latter chose a self-willed life. Jealousy ruled his heart. He became a

murderer, a fugitive, a vagabond, constantly fearing what the same hateful spirit in others might do to him. His tragic story ends with "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord" (Gen. 4:8-16).

This spirit of Cain in the hearts of his children finally led God to say, "My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3). If the "power of love" can't win men, then nothing ever will. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord . . . Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:8-9). After the flood, God reminded Noah that "**Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed**" (Gen. 9:6). Hatred leads to more hatred. Hatred finally leads to murder. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap**" (Gal. 6:7).

Abraham, the great early hero of faith, solved the problem of strife between the herdsmen of Lot and his own by permitting Lot to choose the well watered plain of Jordan. While Lot pitched his tent toward worldly Sodom, Abraham attempted to separate himself from ungodliness. (See Gen. 13:5-18.) But even "faithful Abraham" (Gal. 3:9), a man of outstanding reliance on God, yielded to the use of physical force in delivering wayward Lot. This story, told in Gen. 14:13-16, is the first record of war in the Bible.

Isaac, though weak in many ways, knew the power of love (Gen. 26:6-31). He is known as the early Old Testament peacemaker. At various times the Philistines had closed the wells which Isaac had dug. In turn he simply dug more wells. This story ends with "And Isaac sent them away [after he had prepared a feast for them], and they departed from him in peace" (v. 31).

The story of **Joseph** illustrates the power of forgiving love. (Read Gen. 45:1-15). It is a most touching story. Having been previously wronged by his brothers, and

with power to pay them back in kind, he prepares the way for a full forgiveness. Love ruled Joseph's heart. He might have insisted that his brothers had wronged him and waited for them to confess their sin. But, instead, he tried to make it easy for them to be reconciled with him. He won his brothers to himself and to a greater reliance on God.

Israelites asked to be lovers of peace

When Israel, as a nation, was to be moved out of Egypt, God asked Moses to lead them. He was to take a rod in his hand, a symbol of God's power (Ex. 4:17). We fail to find God's command for them to take weapons of war. Instead they were to take shoes for their feet and staves for their hands for the journey (Ex. 12:11). God's miraculous wonders wrought in Egypt, at the Red Sea, as well as their provision on the way, came without force of arms. With the Red Sea before them, mountains on the sides, and the Egyptians in pursuit, Moses said, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (Ex. 14:13-14). This chapter ends with "And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did . . . and the people feared the Lord, and believed [trusted] the Lord" (v. 31). Had Israel followed in this implicit trust, all might have been well; but they began to murmur and doubt. They tempted the Lord by saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?" (Ex. 17:7). How, then, could the Lord bless them? So He permitted Amalek to oppose them. Wars always bring judgments to both sides. As the Amalekites, no doubt, were ready for judgment for their sinful ways, so the Israelites were reaping loss for their rebellion against the bounteous provisions of God.

God's unchangeable moral law

When Israel came to Mt. Sinai, they were given two tables of the law (Ex. 20), the one a list of obligations

toward God, the other their duties toward fellowmen. Jesus later summed them up in two statements: (1) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God"; (2) "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39). Both are positive commands to love. The sixth commandment says negatively, "**Thou shalt not kill.**" Positively, it means, "**Love everybody everywhere.**" Human life is sacred, for God gives life. God wishes to sustain life. Life is preparation for eternity. He knows the time of each person's departure from this earthly life. It is, therefore, sin to shorten our own lives or the lives of others. **There is no Christian way to kill a man.** Love is God's unchangeable, moral law for all mankind.

The Ten Commandments

God gave the law as a "yard stick" by which men were to measure themselves against His own righteousness. The Israelites were sinners but did not realize it. We need to keep this fundamental moral law before us, both to see how Israel "missed the mark," as well as to see how far we have fallen away from God. One does not cry for help unless one realizes the danger of one's condition. James 2:10 says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." The law shows that we need a Savior! Our righteousness cannot stand before God!

Having, through the grace of God in Jesus Christ, once received forgiveness for the law which we have broken, this very law still represents exactly what God requires, not only in our confession of faith, but also in the conduct of every one of His followers. To claim forgiveness in true repentance is our privilege under grace. But we still face God's judgment: "But if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law" (James 2:11). To kill is to sin whether once forgiven or not. It is just as

wrong for a Christian to kill as it is for a non-Christian to kill.

The conquest of Canaan

The conquest of Jericho is a good illustration of God's original intention. Israel was humble. Feeling weakness, Israel relied on God for help. The walls of the city fell without force of arms. Their attempt to take Ai ended in defeat, because there was sin in the camp. Israel insisted on having its own way and reaped defeat. We must be careful to study the events of the Books of Joshua and Judges in the light of God's definite instructions. (Read Ex. 23:20-33 carefully.) Note expressions such as: "If thou shalt indeed obey . . . and do all I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies . . . little by little will I drive them out from before thee" (vs. 22, 30). Instead, Israel seems to have insisted on fighting their own way. So God, like the parents to whom we referred in Chapter I, said to the wayward children, "You must make the decision." God wanted Israel's best; they chose the second best. Instead of destroying Israel altogether, as God once proposed to Moses, He took them just where they were with the hope of being able to change them from a sinning, warring host to a Christlike company. Jesus clearly sets forth the perfect will of God in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5, 6, and 7). We shall study these essential requirements in the following chapter.

God permitted wars

Based on God's promise to Joshua, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you" (Josh. 1:3); the whole of this land flowing with milk and honey could have been Israel's possession within a reasonable length of time. In faith they might have moved into their promised land. The closing statement of Joshua to Israel includes this reminder: "I sent

the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you . . . not with thy sword, nor with thy bow" (Josh. 24:12). But why did God permit wars? We may also ask, "Why does God permit divorce?" Jesus answers: "**Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so**" (Matt. 19:8). God's intention remains the same, but He does not force men to carry out His will. So when men choose a lesser good than the "pow'r of love"—when they desire their own worldly glory—they reap the consequences of hatred, jealousy, and murder. James asks: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet **ye have not, because ye ask not**" (James 4:1-2). Nothing is gained by killing. We receive only by asking the Lord to provide what we need.

Israel rejects God

The period of the Judges was filled with confusion and bloodshed. God was able through some of these judges to bring the people back to a partial reliance on Himself. Under Samuel, Israel prospered spiritually. His sons, however, "walked not in his ways" (I Sam. 8:3). Then the elders of Israel, voicing the thoughts of their people, asked of Samuel, "Make us a king to judge us **like all the nations**" (v. 5). Samuel prayed to the Lord about this matter. The Lord's answer was: "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for **they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them**" (v. 7). Samuel then did what God commanded, "hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet **protest solemnly unto them** (v. 9). The people's answer was: "**Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that**

our king may . . . go out before us, and fight our battles (vs. 19-20). God's final answer was: **"Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king."**

Israel's rejection of God came through a desire to be like other nations, with powerful armies, heavy taxation, carnal weapons of warfare, worldly greatness, and independence from God's original requests. (Read again carefully I Samuel, Chapter 8.) Israel rejected God when they chose a king. So we reject God when we sell the glorious freedom of the peace of God for a mess of "I-want-to-be-like-others" pottage (I Sam. 12:16-25).

A man after God's heart

King Saul's life ended in incomplete obedience. King David, called "a man after his (God's) own heart," made to be "a captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee" (I Sam. 13:14), was a sweet singer of Israel. But he was a warrior, too. Toward the close of his bloody reign he desired to build a House of the Lord. This privilege was denied him, for the Lord said to him: "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight" (I Chron. 22:8), "Blood-stained hands are not to minister unto the Lord in spiritual things." War is not consistent with the fullest revelation of God's will!

Godly prophets were reminded of God's best for man. Ezra, for instance, when leading a group of Israelites back out of one of their captivities, writes: "I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him. . . ." (Ezra 8:22). The Psalmist says, "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace

and pursue it" (Ps. 34:14). Solomon's wisdom admonishes: "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord, and He shall save thee." Later he says: "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink" (Prov. 20:22; 25:21). Isaiah expressed the yearnings of Godly saints when he foretold the day when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." He then held before the eyes of his people the coming of One, the Messiah, whose "name shall be called . . . **The Prince of Peace**" (Isaiah 2:4; 9:6). (See Appendix for further Scripture passages.)

It is necessary to bear in mind that God in His love and justice does not hold man accountable for that which he does not know. Moffatt translates Acts 17:30 as follows: "Such ages of ignorance God overlooked, but he now charges men that they are all everywhere to repent." In the early days of history men had not seen this truth in its fullness. But it is an entirely different matter for us who have had not only the whole of scriptural revelation, but also four hundred years of teaching of a church which holds to Biblical nonresistance as an essential conviction.

It is well to remember that God's will was being revealed progressively. Old Testament saints did not yet know God as He was later revealed in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. The writings of the prophets have a strong undercurrent of this fuller revelation.

Hosea, the prophet, pictures a grieved God pleading with a wayward people. As Jesus later pictures the father, yearning for the prodigal's return, so God is ever cut to the heart when men insist on their own way. Other prophets repeatedly warned the Israelites against putting their trust or desire for security in alliances, balances of

power, horses and chariots. (Study Ps. 33:16-17; Isa. 2:5-9; 30:15-17; 31:1-3; Jer. 17:5, 7; Hosea 1:7; 7:10-13; 14:3).

For thought and discussion

1. Why did God permit His people to war in Old Testament times?
2. Does the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," hold true in wartime?
3. What was God's original plan for the conquest of Canaan?
4. Why did Israel insist that God grant them a king?
5. Are we any better prepared to be "peacemakers" than Israel was?

For further reading: Hershberger, **War, Peace, and Non-resistance.**

THE POWER OF LOVE, IN JESUS PRESENT EVERMORE

Introduction

So far we have seen that we need a reliable guide, that the path is difficult, and that God is definitely concerned with our well-being. He gave the law to show what He requires. He followed Israel in mercy, often permitting them to do that which was below His standards, still hoping that they might be won to a complete loyalty to Him.

A personal loyalty

Speaking to His disciples, Jesus asked that they might "**be** the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:45). Underscore the word "**be**." Not merely profess to be, but **REALLY BE CHRISTIANS**. As we tried to make clear in Section 1, this involves making a personal promise that we accept all that Jesus was and taught. The power of love is more than a suggestion, more than a law, and more than a promise. It means

accepting Jesus personally into our lives. God not only loves, but "God is love" (I John 4:8). Jesus says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). Christ-likeness is the goal for every Christian. It is impossible unless we ask for and permit Jesus Christ to live in and through us. The Apostle Paul says, "I live; yet not I, but **Christ liveth in me**" (Gal. 2:20).

In His steps

When a small son attempts to follow in the steps of a father as they cross a field of snow, the boy may make it for a few steps. But then he will cry out, "**Daddy, carry me.**" So we find that we can never be what God requires. Then we see that Jesus is the perfect picture of what God really is, that He can forgive our sins, that He can bring us into the fellowship of the Father again. Our hearts rest in peace when we receive the assurance that we have the promise of eternal life.

But how are we to live here and now? I Peter 2:21 says: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.**" What, walk as He did? How can we do that? He was most tender and mild. He suffered patiently, even when He wasn't guilty of punishment. He willingly went to the cross without reviling or threatening His persecutors. That was the kind of a life He lived all the way through: always loving both friend and foe. As Christians we are expected to do the same!

Righting wrongs

Jesus taught that daily forgiveness is important. Wrongs should be confessed and forgiven immediately. Unforgiven sins sear our consciences. They pile up higher and higher until the mountain of wrong, like a volcano, erupts and brings destruction to large areas round about.

Wars begin in such ways. The first, the second, or even the third suspicion, slighting remark, or envious thought, standing alone may not seem so dangerous at the moment. But herein lie the seeds of mass hatred and war with all of its consequences.

Immediate forgiveness brings renewed fellowship. Without forgiveness there is no fellowship with God or fellowmen. The Apostle John says: "If we walk in the Light, as he [God] is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

Resist not evil

Jesus' teachings were exactly in line with the way He lived. Matt. 5:39 says: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." It had been said, and allowed, when one knocked out another's eye or tooth, to permit that injured person to do the same to the injurer. As God in the flesh, Jesus reminds those who heard the Sermon on the Mount of God's higher standard which He had originally intended. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). The law insisted that it was wrong to injure another; grace forgave the guilty; and truth insisted on a higher standard. What, then, was God's plan?

Doesn't the Bible say, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7)? Why then, "Resist not evil"? The Revised Version gives Matt. 5:39 as "Resist not **him** that is evil." By attacking the evildoer we do not destroy his evil deeds. By killing an enemy we only seal the doom of his guilt. We should use the best possible method of saving the sinner from his sin, which needs to be forgiven. We can never forgive one who has harmed us by killing him. Death makes pardon forever impossible.

Sons of thunder

When Jesus began His work, He selected two hot-tempered men as followers. James and John were named "sons of thunder" (Mark 3:17). One day, while on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus sent messengers into a city of Samaria, to prepare for lodging for the night. When the Samaritans would not receive them, these two brothers suggested, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" This attitude was severely rebuked by their Master: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them" (Luke 9:51-56). What a rebuke for warring disciples!

Later a disciple of love

This rebuke must have helped to make John what he later became. He refers to himself as "that disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:7). Not only was John enabled to stand with Jesus when others failed, but tradition states that when John was an old man, a bishop in an area of Asia Minor, he was carried into their church gatherings that they might hear another word from the "beloved Apostle." He would then gather his feeble strength for one more loving warning, "**Children, love one another.**" John had learned to become, at least in a large measure, like his loving Master.

Think no evil

Wars are not born on battle fields. The Apostle John writes: "**Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer:** and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (I John 3:15). This is Jesus' point in Matthew 5:17-48. The proverb says, "A stitch in time saves nine." So if we can put away hatred, then we put away murder. The law had said, "Thou shalt not kill." Jesus adds: "But I say unto you, that **whosoever is angry with his brother**" (v. 22). The law had also said, "Thou shalt not

commit adultery." Jesus adds, "But I say unto you, that **whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her** hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (v. 28).

In the matter of settling disputes Jesus contrasts the method of knocking out each other's eyes and teeth to turning the other cheek and walking the second mile (vs. 38-42). The common practice of loving neighbors and hating enemies He discards for "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (vs. 43-45). The reason God sends the sunshine and the rain both on the evil and on the good is not that the good are particularly worthy, but He constantly tries to bring both nearer to Himself. Earthly blessings are God's reminders of His unwearied love for all. This method is new to those who do not have a forgiving love in their hearts. It is not new to God. (Study I John 4, carefully.) Notice its conclusion: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, **he is a liar**: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" To love God means to love fellowmen also.

Put up thy sword

Numerous are the times when Jesus had to warn Peter not to rely on human strength. Even when Jesus was arrested, Peter drew his sword and injured the servant of the high priest. After healing this servant, Jesus repeated the age-old principle found in Gen. 9:6, but applying it directly to Peter and others like him: "**Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword**" (Matt. 26:52). The sword has no place in the holster of a Christian. Christians in the early church understood Jesus to mean: "**When Jesus disarmed Peter He disarmed every Christian.**" Paul says, "We do not war after the flesh: for the weapons

of our warfare are not carnal" (II Cor. 10:3-4). "The word of God is . . . sharper than any two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12). "Avenge not yourselves . . . vengeance is mine, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19).

Observe all things

Jesus' parting request to His followers was: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). In Matt. 28:20, He adds "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Underscore "**all things.**" The nonresistant teachings of the Bible are definitely a part of it. It is at the heart of the motive of redemption. Another translation gives Rom. 5:8 thus: "But God proves his love for us by the fact that Christ died for us when we were still sinners." We cannot profess love to God, while we hate and kill enemies.

When loyalties conflict

What will we do when we are commanded to deny this love-for-all faith? What did the Apostles do? Many of the Jews, some of the disciples included, had expected Jesus to come as a national leader, as a "George Washington," to free the people from foreign rule. After Easter, when they remembered Jesus' "Lo, I am with you alway," they met opposition with courage. At various times they had been brought to court for teaching about Jesus Christ. Peter finally answers for himself and the other apostles, "**We ought to obey God rather than men.**"

Had not Jesus said: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (Matt. 10:23)? "Ye are not of the world . . . therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19). "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight" (John 18:36). Other Bible writers say: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men" (I Tim. 2:24). "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:6).

"And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good" (I Peter 3:13).

Let every soul be subject

The early Christians understood Romans, Chapter 13, to warn against their joining the forces of anarchy. The Christian is always on the side of law and order. The word "**subject**" (v. 1) means "**to be arrayed under.**" It means to recognize the responsibility of civil rulers in the work which God has entrusted to them. But since much of present world authority does not recognize the Prince of Peace with His methods of love and peace, we can well expect a conflict in the orders which we receive. The government may say, "Come join the ranks and destroy the enemy." The Christian reads his Bible and finds: "Love your enemies . . . if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink" (Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:20).

It is entirely consistent with Christian submission to government to select the other of two alternatives. In our country we are given the choice between joining the armed forces, civilian public service, or even federal prison. The early Christians saw no disgrace or disloyalty in going to prison for their faith. A Christian in jail is tolerant toward the attitude of the government which thinks that he is wrong. To the Christian, obedience to God comes first. He holds no malice toward his jailor. He is in jail merely because killing is sin against God. Being in jail may be a definite proof of his willingness to be subject.

Only good overcomes evil

The Christian, nonresistant position has often been negative. The Apostle Paul states it positively in Rom. 12:21, "**Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.**" Evil brings more evil. Good makes for more good. Jesus said that the "Golden Rule" is based on the law and prophets. To expect "good for good" and "evil

for evil" is human, but not necessarily Christian. Jesus said: "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same." It is nothing more than cold etiquette to return a favor. "And if ye salute your **brethren only**, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" (Matt. 5:46-47). The thing which makes any act distinctively Christian is that it is done to one from whom one does not expect a return of the favor.

"What do ye more than others?"

Jesus never promised that the one who turns the other cheek will not also have it smitten. Usually the offender will not strike a meek-spirited person twice. But if he should do so, the one who has been offended twice is then well on his way toward winning the enemy. The promise is that **"in so doing** [by feeding the enemy, taking suffering from him, going the second mile] **thou shalt** heaps coals of fire on his head" (Rom. 12:20). The chance of winning the individual to yourself and God is of greater importance than the possibility of temporary discomfort.

The second mile

How can going the second mile win another? We are told that the Roman soldier might legally require a Jew to bear his baggage for him for the distance of one mile. Usually this Jew would set his burden down, and turn from the Roman at the end of the mile with a flaming hatred in his heart, with a sour face, and with curses on his lips.

The Jew, however, who had put his trust in the person and teachings of Christ, would patiently carry the additional burden, put on him unjustly by a foreign invader, in a spirit of patience. He would not count each of his steps lest he "overstep" the mile. The Roman soon observes a different spirit, that they are now on their sec-

ond mile, and that his bearer of burdens is interested in a Roman and his welfare. He begins to ask: "Where did you learn such helpfulness? I would never do that for anyone else unless I had to!" The Christian helper then tells him of Jesus who bore his sins, his daily cares, whom he has trusted, and whom he now has the joy of serving.

My dear young friend, the overcome-evil-with-good Christian has the clearest testimony to give. He has a consistent testimony—a witness which our warring world sorely needs and for which it longs!

Rumors of wars

Often we hear well-meaning Christians say, "But does not the Bible say that 'ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars'? What is there that we can do about it?" The reason Jesus foretold the conditions in which we are living today was not to make us feel that there is no use in facing the problem seriously and making a clear-cut decision. His reason was this: **"See that ye be not troubled:** for all these things must come to pass" (Matt. 24:4-14). The Christian is not called to join evildoing in order to fulfill prophecy. In the same passage we read: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (v.12). This is a warning, lest we compromise while we warm ourselves at the fires of the world—fires of "what's the use?" fires of "I hate to be different from the rest"; and fires of "what can one C.O. do, standing alone?" Remember: Ours is an individual faith; and individual responsibility. "He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved" (v. 13). Wars to end wars are illusions. Wars always create the conditions which make for more wars.

"Blessed are the peacemakers"

This is no time for compromise. This is the time for young people who love the "way of peace" more clearly to define their Christian, conscientious convictions. The

Scriptures are on the side of the nonresistant Christian. History is on his side. The Prince of Peace, who said, **"Blessed are the peacemakers,"** stands ready to sustain a faith that is anchored in eternity. One of our young men who was taking a stand for Christ in one of the camps during the First World War was reminded, **"Twenty-five years in the penitentiary is a long time."** To this he was calmly enabled to say, **"But eternity is much longer!"**

May we urge that you make the study of the scriptural basis of our faith your constant assignment. Study your Bible with the prayer that the Lord may show you the straight and narrow way which "leadeth unto life." Jesus warns, "And few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:14). May joy be yours in helping to make ours a church which shall be true to Him "who loved us and gave himself for us." **God and one Christian always make a majority.**

For thought and discussion

1. What is the difference between an opinion and a conviction?
2. What does "heap coals of fire on his head" mean?
3. In what ways can we go the second mile or turn the other cheek?
4. Why do so many Christians ignore the duty of being peacemakers?
5. Can I be a true follower of Christ on a battlefield?

For further reading: P. C. Hiebert, **Mennonites and Their Heritage**, No. VI;
Ernest Bohn, **Christian Peace**.

CHAPTER II

The Historical Background

Golden Text: "Other Foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ."

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

The New Testament church

The early New Testament church was composed of men and women who, having accepted Jesus as their Savior and having dedicated themselves to His discipleship, voluntarily formed themselves into a Christian fellowship, initiated by the symbol of adult baptism upon confession of faith.

Fifteen hundred years later Menno Simons describes the true church as follows:

Behold, worthy reader, all those who are born of God with Christ, who thus conform their weak life to the Gospel, are thus converted, and follow the example of Christ, hear and believe His Holy Word, follow His commands which he in plain words commanded us in the Holy Scriptures for the Holy Christian church, have the promise.

To these early followers of the lowly Nazarene the Gospel was not only a guide to heaven, but also a way of life among their fellow men. The central truth of the Gospel message as found in the Sermon on the Mount was love—love to God and love to fellow man. Human life was sacred to these early Christians, too sacred to be arbitrarily snuffed out like a lit candle by a chance puff of wind, individually in a spirit of hatred, or collectively in war. War, therefore, as well as murder was forbidden

the followers of the Prince of Peace. "Thou shalt not kill" was a divine command that knew no exceptions. For nearly three hundred years all the early church fathers taught that war was sin; and inconsistent, therefore, with the Christian life; and practically no Christians were found in the armies of that day.

The so-called conversion of Constantine

By 300 A.D. the Christian church had gained many adherents throughout the Roman empire, not only among the common people but also among those of influence in economic and social circles; sufficiently powerful enough perhaps to convince the emperor Constantine, hitherto a pagan, that he might make some use of the Christian church in his campaigns against the heathen tribes who were threatening his frontiers. First he granted Christians toleration; then he half-heartedly accepted the faith himself, postponing the rite of baptism, however, to the time when he was on his deathbed; and finally making Christianity the sole state religion of the empire.

This act was perhaps the greatest calamity that ever befell the Christian church, though many would regard it as a great milestone in the progress of the Christian faith. It had three far-reaching revolutionary results: (1) It united the destiny of the church with the state, ending ultimately in religious intolerance; (2) It opened wide the doors of the church to the influx of all the pagan religious and social ideals and practices of the period; (3) It made the Christian church a fighting church, and military service an obligation of its membership. The church as an organization as a result lost its nonresistant testimony and practice.

By the fifteenth century, what had originally been a simple Christian fellowship, had developed into a power-

ful, world-wide ecclesiastical hierarchy, including popes, bishops, and a long list of other highly influential and tax-supported clerical officials, that often vied with the imperial authorities for political as well as spiritual control of the people. Popes and bishops had thus themselves become temporal rulers with the same political ambitions, the same lust for power as their secular rivals, supported by armed forces with which they sometimes fought among themselves, as well as with rival kings and emperors.

The church had thus become nationalized, corrupt, and intolerant. Religious dissent was not permitted. There was no freedom of conscience. Zwingli, on the other hand, the leader of the Swiss reformation which had its beginning at Zurich, at first seemed more inclined to a complete break with the old order, and a return all the way back to the New Testament church. But in the final test he, too, lacked the faith and the courage to take this step, being satisfied with the Zurich Council to accept a halfway reform.

Both the German and Swiss leaders finally compromised on some rather radical changes in the structure of church government—the complete elimination of the priesthood, and certain changes in church doctrines and practices; but both retained in their systems the fundamental source of the corruption in the old church—namely, union of church and state, with its compulsory membership and religious intolerance. For the Catholic pope and bishops they substituted a new tax-supported ecclesiastical hierarchy, closely allied with the political authorities. The church remained nationalized and membership was still compulsory. There was no religious freedom, and soul liberty was unknown. The church remained a fighting church. Zwingli himself died on the battlefield fighting against fellow Christians.

The Anabaptists or Mennonites

The church we know today as the Mennonite Church had its origin in Switzerland as a progressive wing of the Zwingli movement in Zurich. When Zwingli agreed with the political authorities in that city upon a halfway reform, some of his former associates, such men as Conrad Grebel, Felix Mantz, and others, broke relations with his movement, and after some months of Bible study carried on in the homes of the different members, agreed to inaugurate a completely new church based as nearly as they knew how on the New Testament foundation. This step was taken when, in January, 1525, in the home of one of the members of this group, under the leadership of Grebel, the rite of baptism was performed among them, thus inaugurating a new Christian fellowship based on confession of faith. These men no longer regarded their infant baptism in the Catholic church as valid. But their opponents, who still retained their belief in the validity of infant baptism, accused the new group of adopting a second baptism, and for that reason called them Anabaptists (rebaptizers). Among themselves, however, the latter spoke of them themselves merely as "brethren." Later, when Menno Simons joined the group, they finally became known as Mennonites.

This new church, thus inaugurated, agreed with the state churches in many of the fundamental Christian doctrines, such as "The Trinity," "Atonement," "Resurrection," "Incarnation," and other basic doctrines of the Christian faith; but they introduced certain distinctive principles and practices which set them apart from the other Reformation churches. Of these the most distinctive and far-reaching and advanced was the doctrine of nonresistance which was based upon the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, but also in numerous other Scripture passages. The fact that this doctrine rests on good scriptural foundation does not necessarily

prevent it from being based on good psychology and human nature as well. There is no social law more true than this, that "like begets like." Hatred begets hatred, and only love engenders love and good will; only love cures hate and all its evil results. The law of nonresistance applies to the whole of life, to the relations between individuals in their daily contacts as well as to the relation between nations. To the Mennonites, therefore, war was a sin, and like all sin, to be completely avoided.

Most Christians, of course, hate war. But to them war is only a great inescapable evil, and its elimination a desirable goal and a pious wish, to be shared by the Christian as well as others. But to the Mennonite, nonresistance and the respect for human life, the refusal to kill under any circumstance, became a fundamental religious injunction, a doctrine as essential in the scheme of salvation as any other doctrine. And so the Mennonites refused to go to war, just as they refused participation in any other sin.

Some years later the Quakers and the Dunkards also adopted this doctrine on war as a vital part of their religious faith. These three groups then, today known as the Historic Peace Churches, became and remain the outstanding exponents of the law of love as applied to all our social relations, individual and national, and as the only solution for all our quarrels and tensions, private and national. The only remedy for war is refusal to go to war.

Menno Simons on war

The regenerated do not go to war nor fight. They are the children of peace who have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks and know no war. They give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's. Their sword is the word of the Spirit which they wield with a good conscience through the Holy Ghost.

Since we are to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29) how can we then fight our enemies with the sword? Does not the apostle Peter say, "For even hereunto were ye called, be-

cause Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (I Peter 2:21, 23; Matthew 16:24).

And this is in accord with the words of John who says, "He that saith he abideth in him also ought himself so to walk, even as he walked" (I John 2:6). And Christ Himself says, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). Again, "My sheep hear my voice . . . and they follow me" (John 10:27).

Questions for discussion

1. Did Constantine actually see the sign in the sky, "By This Sign Conquer—IHS," or did he just think so?
2. What part does God play in war?
3. Why did Luther and Zwingli retain the union of church and state in their religious system?
4. Is it true that the so-called conversion of Constantine was a great calamity to the church? If so, why?
5. Did the early Christian missionaries before Constantine spread the Gospel by force or love?
6. What do we mean by a "nationalistic" church?
7. Can you win people by hating them? Can you make them good by hating them?
8. What kind of a peace with Germany will most likely lead to permanent good relations with Germany in the future—a hard punitive peace or an "easy" peace? Should Germany be punished? How and why?

THE MENNONITES OF EUROPE

Nonresistance not a cause of persecution

Contrary to a general opinion, the most revolutionary of all the distinctive teachings of the Mennonite faith, namely the refusal to bear arms, was not at first the sole nor even the main cause of persecution which the Mennonites were forced to suffer so brutally at the hands of the state churches and their closely affiliated state governments.

Before the Napoleonic wars, armies were generally filled with volunteers; conscription was seldom necessary. Soldiering had become a profession, an easy way of making a living. Men did not choose to fight usually for a worthy cause even, but for pay, or adventure, or above all for the prospect of plunder. Armies were not large, and fighting not particularly hazardous nor burdensome. War was not total as now. Even the average citizen was seldom forced into armed service against his will. Mennonites, therefore, who refused military service because of religious convictions were not more conspicuous among their fellows in this respect than others who refused on other grounds.

There were some exceptions, of course, as when the rulers of the Swiss cantons sold the services of their conscript subjects to whatever German warlord paid the highest price for them; or the Hessians, who fought for the British in the Revolutionary War; or in the case of Frederick William, king of Prussia, who in 1723, in search of "long fellows" for his famous Potsdam body guards, impressed half a dozen stalwart Mennonites near Tilsit into his service. Being reminded, however, by the elders of the church of the promises of exemption made by the king's predecessors, he released them.

Substitute service and exemptions

Sometimes in case of a long siege of a city, or when the entire countryside had been ravaged by marauding armies and the entire population was called on for some sort of constructive or preventive noncombatant service, Mennonites were permitted to choose this form of duty rather than active army service. When William of Orange in Holland was hard pressed by the Spanish in the wars of Dutch liberation in 1572, the Mennonites of Holland came to his aid with a substantial sum of money, with the stip-

ulation, however, that it was to be used for the current expenses of the government and not for war. When Hamburg was besieged by the Swedes in 1686, Mennonites were given the task of extinguishing the fires caused by the bombardment of the city.

Complete exemption was frequently offered Mennonites by such rulers and noblemen who had large stretches of waste and otherwise uncultivated lands for which they desired industrious tenant farmers, and because of which they were willing to waive the obligation of military duty in lieu of other important civilian service.

The large and prosperous Mennonite settlement along the Vistula delta in Prussia was founded in the middle of the sixteenth century by Dutch Mennonite exiles who had been invited by Prussian and Polish noblemen of this area to settle on their swamplands hitherto unoccupied. Here, because of their industry and valuable aid in reclaiming these swamps, the Mennonites were granted, among other liberal privileges, complete exemption from military obligations; and, in course of time, they transformed these waste lands into a garden spot and the largest and most prosperous Mennonite settlement in all Germany.

When, during the closing years of the eighteenth century, the Prussian kings disregarded the promises given by their predecessors to the Mennonites, and began to limit their religious privileges, about one-half of the latter migrated to south Russia. Here, just at that time, the Russian empress, Catherine the Great, anxious for thrifty and industrious farmers to settle on the crown lands she had just won from Turkey along the northern shore of the Black Sea, was offering Mennonites, as well as other Germans, most attractive inducements for settlement: free land, religious liberty, exclusive control of their own language and schools, a large degree of local political autonomy, and, above all, exemption from military service.

Finally, when in 1870 the Russian Czars, following the example of Germany in introducing universal peacetime military training, also neglected their earlier promises in exempting Mennonites from this obligation, the Mennonites again decided upon another trek for conscience sake. Although the Czar's government finally agreed, after repeated petitioning by the Mennonite elders, to offer a substitute service—forestry and hospital—which seemed fairly satisfactory to the majority of the Mennonites, yet about one-third of them decided to leave their native land rather than compromise their religious convictions. This time their eyes were turned toward North America. In Manitoba they were granted all the privileges and exemptions enjoyed by their forefathers in all these other earlier grants. Those who chose the United States had full faith that compulsory service would never be demanded here, and were assured by President Grant that although there were no laws granting this exemption, yet it was his opinion that no one would ever be compelled to violate his religious convictions in this matter.

In South Germany, Mennonites, during the early nineteenth century, were permitted to furnish substitutes when called on for military duty. The Mennonites in France and Switzerland were usually granted similar privileges.

Everywhere, in all lands where Mennonites were found, the governments were inclined to recognize the rights of conscience among the Mennonites on the matter of military service, and some sort of substitute service or complete exemption was granted them. While the substitute service usually satisfied the majority of them, there was always a large minority, those most conscientious on this question, who, refusing to compromise their convictions, chose exile rather than a denial of their faith.

Universal military training and conscription

The program of universal compulsory military peacetime training and conscription, begun by Germany in the middle of the past century, and followed by most of the other countries of Europe soon after, brought the Mennonites face to face with a new test of their nonresistant faith. When the North German Confederation, in 1868, introduced general military peacetime training without any consideration for Mennonite scruples, the elders of the Vistula churches finally, after a series of petitions to the Berlin authorities, succeeded in securing what is known as the Cabinet Order of 1868, which permitted the Mennonites to substitute for active military duty a non-combatant form of duty—hospital, quartermaster, or commissary—within the ranks of the army, however. This provision was adopted by the newly formed German empire in 1870 and remained the legal privilege of the Mennonites up to the First World War in 1914.

As noted above, Russia, which soon followed the example of Germany in the introduction of peacetime training, also provided, after repeated petitioning by the elders of the Russian church, a similar substitute provision, entirely separate from the army, however, and work in forestry rather than work in some department of the regular army—entirely a civilian service.

In defense of the faith

Up to the middle of the past century, the Mennonite ministers and church leaders generally throughout Europe were consistent in their efforts to maintain the peace traditions and practices of the fathers. In 1803 the South Germans, in a conference held at Ibersheim in the Palatinate, passed a resolution denying membership to the young men who had voluntarily joined the army. A little later there was an unusual case in one of the Prussian churches. A certain vonRiesen, had been excommuni-

cated in the Elbing congregation by the elder for having volunteered for service at Waterloo, for which action the excommunicant brought suit against the elder in the Prussian courts. The court later dismissed the case, however, for want of cause for action. The other Prussian elders supported the Elbing elder in this case.

As already noted, both the German Cabinet Order of 1868, and the Russian substitute forestry service in 1870, were made possible only by the repeated petitioning and the tireless efforts of the various church elders.

In Holland, too, the official organization of the Dutch ministers, the General Mennonite Society, locally referred to as the "A. D. S.," was reluctant to justify voluntary military service during this period.

But, while the church leaders seemed anxious to maintain the peace principles of the church, the membership at large and especially the young men most vitally concerned did not always show the same enthusiasm for the faith of the fathers. Many of them joined the armies. Only in Russia did the Mennonites at the time of the First World War avail themselves of the legal, substitute service still open to them.

For this loss of interest among the European Mennonites in their traditional peace principles there are a number of causes. The city churches with their closer contacts with the outside political and social world, especially those in Holland and northwestern Germany were the first to depart from the faith. The city of Danzig, in the eastern part of Germany, likewise early became lukewarm, having no representation among the Prussian elders who petitioned for exemption in 1868.

Among the causes given by the European Mennonite historians themselves may be mentioned: (1) the continued attack of the state churches against Mennonite nonconformity in general, forcing many young Mennon-

ites into the state churches; (2) mixed marriages with non-Mennonite life partners who had little knowledge and less sympathy with Mennonite peace principles; (3) the growing spirit of nationalism and patriotism, prevalent throughout Europe during this period; (4) lack of Mennonite schools where Mennonite ideals might be taught the young people.

The introduction of peacetime military training, too, must have been the most serious of all the causes for this growing indifference to the earlier peace convictions. Such young men as had not already given up their earlier beliefs, were now gradually weaned away from their objections to actual participation in war by the false belief that military training in peacetime did not necessarily commit them to actual war service, and thus chose the easy way of peacetime training, when at first, perhaps, they would have refused actual war service. But military training in times of peace leaves no logical alibi for refusing actual service in time of war.

The continued migration to America throughout the century served as another cause, for it resulted in most of the conscientious peace advocates within the church leaving the country, leaving only a remnant in Europe who were more willing to compromise their nonresistant beliefs.

Most important, perhaps, of all the causes was the unpopularity of the Mennonite position, especially in times of great war enthusiasm. Nobody wants to be unpopular. It takes great courage to go against the popular tide and a tremendous spirit of unselfishness, which not all are willing to face. It needs to be remembered that pioneering in any cause always demands a great price. There is no progress without sacrifice.

Outside of Russia, the Mennonites of Europe had practically lost their nonresistant faith by 1914, although their

legal rights to some sort of substitute service was still recognized in the different countries. But the terrible suffering of the war caused many a disillusioned Mennonite to look back and wonder after all whether the European Mennonite Church had not given up a very vital religious principle when it lost its earlier testimony against the curse of war.

Dr. Christian Neff, the leading Mennonite minister of South Germany at this time, says in the **Jugendwarte** in 1923:

The doctrine of nonresistance is and remains a significant religious and ethical problem. Praiseworthy have been the efforts of our churches in solving it, as is well shown in our history. The world war has revived the problem, and laid it afresh on our hearts, and challenged our consciences. May we realize the significance of this question, and above all may our young people consider it earnestly and prayerfully.

The Dutch Mennonites, too, inspired by certain English Quakers, organized after the war, a young people's movement called the **Gemeentedagbewegung** in which they hoped to revive some of the piety of the earlier Mennonite fathers, including a renewal of the nonresistant faith. During the All-Mennonite Congress, held in Amsterdam in 1936, a number of Dutch and American Mennonites and one German met in one of the Brotherhouses of this Dutch youth movement to form an "International Mennonite Peace Society."

Questions for discussion

1. Why was not the peace principle a cause of persecution among the early Mennonites?
2. How did the Swiss military policy differ from that of the other countries?
3. Why did the European Mennonites lose their peace principles?
4. Was it consistent for the Prussian Mennonites to serve as noncombatants in the army?
5. Why were the Russian Mennonites more able to retain

the nonresistant faith than the Dutch or the German Mennonites?

THE MENNONITES OF AMERICA

Mennonites a selected people

The Mennonites of America, like the Puritans of New England, have been a select people, sifted from the European Mennonites on a basis of a tender conscience on the question of war. Many of the Mennonite immigrants, especially those from Russia, left their homeland because of the militarism prevailing there, or the threat of it. Here in peace-loving America they were privileged to enjoy their peace convictions unmolested. Until World War I, the wars in America were fought almost entirely by volunteers; hence, the question of military exemption was never a serious one for the Mennonites. Freedom from military service was always taken for granted. The first Mennonite settlers were fortunate, also, in choosing to live in the land of the Quakers, and other peace groups—Moravians, Dunkards, and Schwenkfelders—the land of Pennsylvania.

The Revolutionary War

It was not until the Revolutionary War that the Pennsylvania Mennonites first felt the pressure of the war spirit. In this struggle all the colonists were sharply divided on the question of severing connections with the mother country into "Tories" and "Patriots"; neighbor was often pitted against neighbor in civil strife. Mennonites, because they opposed war on any ground, and because they refused to take the oath were usually classed with the Tories, and treated accordingly by their super-patriotic fellow citizens. In the small, isolated Saucon congregation, at one time in the fall of 1778 the whole adult male population were thrown into jail, had all their property confiscated, even their household goods, leaving

their families homeless and propertyless—all because they refused to take the oath of allegiance after the Declaration of Independence, not because of disloyalty to the new state of Pennsylvania, but because of their opposition to oaths in general on religious grounds.

The state government, however, always respected the religious convictions of its peace-minded citizens. In the summer of 1775, at the opening of the war, the Pennsylvania Assembly, in an act recommending that all able bodied men should form “associations” for the common defense, suggested that since

... many of the Good People of this Province are conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, it is further recommended to the associators for the defense of their county and others that they bear a tender regard toward this class of their fellow subjects and countrymen.

After the Revolutionary War and the adoption of the Constitution, the Federal government depended largely on the state militia for its armed forces. Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, where Quakers, Mennonites, and Dunkards were found, exempted these peace churches from the militia musters required of its citizens, usually upon the payment of a small money consideration.

The wars of 1812 and 1848 were small affairs, fought by volunteers, and thus were not a problem for the Mennonites.

The Civil War

The Civil War, too, was fought mostly by volunteers. It was not until near the close of the conflict, 1864, when manpower was becoming short, that the Federal Government resorted to conscription. The conscription act passed at that time provided that all draftees not desiring to serve might furnish a substitute at such a price as the

bounty jumpers¹ of the time, of course, might demand. But Mennonites and other churches were exempt upon a straight payment of \$300. Such Mennonites as were drafted took advantage of this provision. Generally this sum became the obligation of the entire congregation of which the draftee was a member. Members joining the army voluntarily were usually placed under church censorship.

In the Confederacy, Mennonites did not fare so well. In the early days of the war a number of young Virginians were sent to prison for refusing to serve, but were later released. In 1862, the Confederate government passed a conscription act in which members of the peace churches were granted exemption on payment of \$500. Near the end of the war, however, due to the shortage of manpower, this concession was repealed. Many of the young Virginia Mennonites escaped through the lines into the north until the close of the war.

The coming of the Russian Mennonites

The migration of Mennonites from Russia during the middle 70's of the past century to escape military service in their native land again revived interest in the question of military exemption here. The immigrants, naturally, were anxious to know whether they could here be assured the privileges denied them in Russia. In Manitoba, as we have already seen, they were liberally granted by the Canadian government all they asked for. In the United States, while they were promised no special concessions by the Federal government, they felt sure, nevertheless, that their religious principles would always be respected.

¹Men who made it a practice of accepting substitute service for a price, and then deserting, to again accept repeated substitute service in another part of the country, thus accumulating a considerable sum of money before they were discovered.

The western states, however, in which they settled, anxious for industrious farmers to locate on their free lands, went out of their way to promise the Mennonites such concessions as were in their power. Urging the Assembly of Kansas, in 1874, to repeal a burdensome tax-fine for failure to take part in militia musters, Governor Osborne said:

It is hoped that large accessions may be made of these worthy settlers, and it may be properly considered whether any class of people who are conscientiously opposed to bearing arms should be compelled to pay an onerous tax to be relieved therefrom. It strikes me as incongruous that such religious convictions should be made taxable by our laws.

The desired law in favor of the Mennonites was passed by the Kansas Assembly. A few years later both Nebraska and Minnesota passed similar legislation.

The World War

It was not until World War I that the United States adopted for the first time, at the very beginning, a policy of conscript army service. This policy, no doubt, inevitable in an era of total war, nevertheless was received with more or less of a shock by the people in general and with considerable anxiety by the Mennonites, who were wholly unprepared for this emergency. Freedom from war service had always been taken for granted by them, so much so that it was hardly thought necessary to stress the doctrine of nonresistance in the education of their young people. The fact that they might be called upon some day to put their faith to the test never entered their minds. That crisis now came as a surprise for which they had made no preparation.

Church meetings were held by the leaders in different parts of the country; petitions were sent to the President and Congress by the different Mennonite bodies; and various delegations were sent to state and federal authorities. As a result of the pressure brought upon Con-

gress from Quakers, Mennonites, Dunkards, and other peace groups, as well as the example, no doubt of the English law in behalf of the English conscientious objectors, provision was made for those who had religious scruples against war service.

The act as passed in 1917 exempted on religious grounds,

Members of any well organized religious sect or organization at present organized and existing whose creed or principles forbid its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of said organization. But no person shall be exempted from service in any capacity that the President shall declare noncombatant.

This law may have been considered quite liberal by those who had little regard for religious convictions; yet neither the law itself nor its administration was altogether satisfactory to those for whose benefit it was intended.

In the first place, all the men were inducted directly into the army, where their status as religious noncombatants and the kind of noncombatant service they were to render was to be decided by army officials, who had no sympathy for the men with religious scruples, and very little for the law that gave them these special privileges. Many of these officers were more concerned with breaking down the morale of the religious objector and in inducing him to enter regular service than in finding suitable noncombatant work for him.

Often arbitrary orders were given by these officers which they knew could not be obeyed, and which were meant as an excuse for courtmartialing those who refused. The most conscientious, of course, were the most likely to disobey. Many of the men were roughly handled. Two of them, Hutterites, died as a result of mistreatment and exposure. In the second place, noncombatant service

was not clearly outlined. The President did not define the term until near the close of the war. In the meantime, it was generally understood that it included hospital work, commissary, quartermaster, clerical duties in the army, though not directly connected with the killing process.

But there were those who felt that it was just as inconsistent with their peace principles to carry food and shells to those who did the killing as to bear arms themselves. These were the "absolutists," who objected to any service directly connected with the army, but perfectly willing to serve their country in hospitals, on farms, or in reconstruction and relief work if carried on under civilian control. Noncombatant service, they felt, was a compromise that carried with it very little testimony against the war system. But this type of work was denied them. These were later called "conscientious objectors," a name already familiar in England, but known here now for the first time. About one hundred Mennonites, among about three hundred all told, during the war were finally railroaded by army courtmartials to the Federal Penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth for "disobedience to military orders," orders purposely issued by the army officials which they knew the conscientious objectors would not and could not conscientiously obey. Most of these sentences were from ten to twenty years, but all of the Mennonites were released soon after the close of the war. Most of the other Mennonites took the noncombatant service as outlined in the conscription act. Those who took regular service were few.

Lessons from the war

Profiting by their experience during the war, the various Mennonite bodies learned that by cooperative effort they might further their common purposes much better than by separate action. They learned, too, that

profession of peace ideals must be implemented by actual service to the needs of the world if their peace testimony was to be effective. To this end the founding of the Mennonite Central Committee, representing all the leading branches of the Church, was a most significant result of their war experiences. It is this most effective committee which today is so efficiently directing, not only the whole Mennonite Civilian Public Service program, but also carrying on an ever-widening and needed relief program in Europe, Asia, and South America.

Questions for Discussion

1. Were the Mennonites in the Civil War consistent in accepting a money-payment substitute in lieu of active service?
2. What are the duties of the Mennonite Central Committee?
3. Why was the exemption clause in the Conscription Act of 1917 unsatisfactory to those claiming exemption?
4. Who were the conscientious objectors during the first World War?
5. Is noncombatant service in the army consistent with the doctrine of nonresistance?

Other reading references for this section on the Historical Background.

C. Henry Smith, **The Story of the Mennonites**

C. Henry Smith, **Mennonites and Their Heritage**, Vol. II

Harold S. Bender, **Our Mennonites and Their Heritage**, Vol. I

John Horsch, **Principles of Nonresistance As Held by the Mennonite Church**

John Horsch, **Symposium on War**

Edward Yoder and Don Smucker, **The Christian and Conscription**

Edward Yoder, **Mennonites and Their Heritage**, Vol. III

CHAPTER III

Our Peace Witness During World War II

"By this shall all men know that ye are
my disciples, if ye love one another."
(John 13:25)

THE DECISION REACHED

Introduction

Two things should be clear to us from studying the previous six lessons. The first is that God has revealed Himself through Jesus Christ as a God of love. As children of God and disciples of Christ we are required to make this love the law of our lives, and we must come to believe that the love of God in us is powerful enough to overcome all evil. The second is that the Mennonite Church from its beginning and throughout its history has professed and practiced the doctrine of Biblical nonresistance. The question now is: What of the present and the future?

A great choice

At the approach of World War II, which was foreshadowed in the United States by the adoption of a program of compulsory military training in 1940, the Mennonite Church was faced with a great choice. How could the four-century-old peace principles of the church be preserved in the face of compulsory military training? If you had been a leader in the Mennonite Church and could have helped decide which course of action your church should take, what would you have advocated?

Would you have suggested that all drafted men in the church accept service in the regular armed forces regard-

less of the nature of the duties required? Would you have advised all drafted Mennonite men to serve as non-combatants in the medical department of the army in which case they would have been able to do humanitarian service although under military direction and orders, yet not directly involved in fighting and killing? Or, would you have suggested that Mennonite men take an "absolutist" position, and refuse to do any form of military service whatever or refuse to take any orders from military authorities even though this might mean being arrested, and sentenced to a Federal penitentiary?

These were the possible choices which the leaders of our church actually faced at the outbreak of the war. But they were not satisfied with any of them. They thought of yet another way, namely, presenting to the Government a proposal for doing alternative service. Instead of participating in military service, they would ask to do other types of constructive service consistent with their Christian convictions. This alternative service was based on the idea that Christians must love their enemies as well as their own country, and that they believed in being law-abiding and in helping their fellowman. They believed that the efforts of the Christian must be constructive rather than destructive; that war is both immoral and useless, and that the only way to overcome evil is by doing good. In brief, they believed in the old Chinese proverb that it was better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.

How we got CPS¹

If you had advocated the latter kind of program, you would have done exactly what your church leaders tried to do, namely, work out a civilian rather than a military

¹Philip Jacob, **The Origins of Civilian Public Service** (Washington, D.C.: The National Service Board for Religious Objectors), 1946, 27 pp., 25 cents.

program of service; a program that could be engaged in with a clear conscience by those who had been taught by church, Scripture, and direct revelation that war and Christianity could never be reconciled with each other.

Representatives of the three Historic Peace Churches—the Quakers, the Church of the Brethren, and the Mennonites—held joint meetings to discuss the possibilities of an alternative service program. After lengthy discussions and much prayerful thought, they agreed on a plan and in January of 1940 presented it to President Roosevelt and to other Government officials, such as members of the Cabinet and members in Congress. The President warmly received the suggestion that the Historic Peace Churches were willing to do positive service for their country in time of war, rather than merely refuse to fight. In the course of time and after much further negotiation with the President's Advisory Committee, members of Congress, and the Selective Service officials, provision was made in the Selective Service and Training Act, Section 5 (g) as follows:

Nothing contained in this act shall be construed to require any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the land or naval forces of the United States, who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form. Any such person claiming such exemption from combatant training and service because of such conscientious objections whose claim is sustained by the local board, shall, if he is inducted into the land or naval forces under this act, be assigned to noncombatant service as defined by the President, or shall, if he is found to be conscientiously opposed to participation in such noncombatant service, in lieu of such induction, be assigned to work of national importance under civilian direction. Any such person claiming such exemption from combatant training and service because of such conscientious objections shall, if such claim is not sustained by the local board, be entitled to an appeal to the appropriate appeal board provided for in section 10 (a) (2).

The significant thing about this provision for alternative service is that it marked a new advance in religious

liberty in America. For the first time in this country conscientious objectors were granted by law the right to have a program of alternative service in time of war. It illustrated a new "high" in the toleration of religious minorities in a democracy. Would the church people recognize this and would they support such an alternative program? There was indication that they would.

Going the "second mile"

The Selective Service and Training Act of September 16, 1940, did not specify the nature of the alternative service, nor did it provide for financial appropriations to establish and maintain the program or pay for the services of the men who were drafted. Neither did it provide for the dependents of the drafted men, such as their wives, their parents, and their children. The Mennonite Church, along with the Quakers and the Church of the Brethren, was faced with a very big question. Could these churches stand the financial cost of establishing and operating an alternative service program? This was, indeed, a test of the Historic Peace Churches' sincerity of their long-standing profession of the doctrine of nonresistance. They accepted the challenge and promised Selective Service that they would attempt to meet the financial cost of this program for a one-year trial period. No one knew what the cost would be, because no one knew how many drafted men would choose to be sent to Civilian Public Service camps. This was an act of faith on the part of those who set up the program.

There were those who felt that men who were drafted and compelled to perform work for their Government should also receive compensation for it. It seemed like an injustice not to pay for the maintenance of the men and a minimum allowance for their work, and an even greater injustice not to provide for the dependents of the drafted men. The Historic Peace Churches, however,

were thinking not in terms of fundamental rights so much as they were thinking of finding a "better way" for the Christian to serve his country in time of war.

They based their belief on that portion of the Sermon on the Mount which says that if a man asks you to walk a mile you should willingly agree to walk two, and that if a man asks you for your overcoat you should give him your coat also. In other words, our Mennonite leaders felt that when they, as conscientious Christians, were compelled to give service to their country they agreed to go the **second** mile in fulfilling their obligations of service. This was a way of witnessing for Christ and His kingdom. It was a way of testifying to the world that at least **some** Christians believed that the teachings of Jesus were practical for this day and age and that the Sermon on the Mount was intended as a rule and guide for this life here and now.

The size and extent of the Civilian Public Service program

When the United States introduced compulsory military conscription it provided for three types of service. The first, regular military service with a classification of I-A; the second limited military service in which the participant would not have to engage in actually killing the enemy. This classification was I-A-O and more commonly known as the noncombatant service. A third class provided for the person who was opposed on religious grounds to all forms of participating in war. This class was known as 4-E, the type which had been proposed to the government by representatives of Historic Peace Churches.

The total number of men assigned to the IV-E classification in the first five years, between May, 1941, and May 31, 1946, was 11,875. Not all of these men were in camp at one time. Some were discharged on grounds of physical disability or occupational necessity or hardship

cases, while others were constantly being drafted. The over-all Civilian Public Service program was administered by the joint efforts of the American Friends Service Committee, the Church of the Brethren, and the Mennonite Central Committee. As the program developed, other church organizations such as the Methodist Peace Committee, the Catholic Pacifist Fellowship, and the Baptist Peace Fellowship also administered one or more small units. All of these agencies together maintained and worked through one central office in Washington, known as the National Service Board for Religious Objectors.

Throughout the entire war years, of the total number of men in Civilian Public Service, approximately 40 per cent were Mennonites. After the war ended, the Government continued to conscript men and will continue to do so until March 31, 1947. The percentage of Mennonites in Civilian Public Service is about 50 per cent of the total men in the program. In all, approximately 5,000 young Mennonite men spent some time in the Civilian Public Service program. Of this total there were 800-850 men from the General Conference. These men came from all parts of the country and from a wide variety of occupations and backgrounds. Some congregations had no representatives in the Civilian Public Service program, while a few congregations had all of their drafted men either in Civilian Public Service camps or in noncombatant military service. The great majority of churches had some men in each of the three types of service available to drafted men.

The Civilian Public Service program at first was confined to base camps which were taken over from the earlier Civilian Conservation Corps program commonly known as the CCC. As time went on, new forms of alternative service were arranged through the Selective

Service. The Peace Churches tried from the beginning to have Civilian Public Service men used for foreign relief work in war-torn areas. This was prevented by means of Congressional action, brought about largely by pressure from war veterans groups. This legal restriction prevented conscientious objectors from ministering to the needs of suffering war victims, although many conscientious objectors would have been willing to face any kind of dangers to do so.

Selective Service restricted the work at first to such governmental agencies as the Soil Conservation Service, the National Forestry Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Farm Security Administration. Later on, projects were opened with the Public Health Service in Florida, Mississippi, and in Puerto Rico. Civilian Public Service units were established on six or seven state university agricultural campuses for the purpose of carrying on a variety of socially useful experiments.

A dairy farm service program was opened in about ten states. This program provided for Civilian Public Service men to be assigned to dairy farmers who could prove that they were in special need of farm labor. In some states Civilian Public Service men were used by dairy-herd improvement associations as dairy-herd testers. The money received from the farmers for the work of the Civilian Public Service men was put into a "frozen fund" to be disposed of later by action of the Government and the Historic Peace Churches. This sum now amounts to over \$2,000,000, but no disposition has been made of it to date. The most frequent suggestion for its use by the Civilian Public Service men is that it be used for relief of human suffering in war-torn areas.

One of the most significant developments of the Civilian Public Service program was the opening of men-

tal hospitals to units of Civilian Public Service men who were assigned chiefly as patient attendants. Approximately 1,500 Mennonite men have had experience in mental hospital service.

Administering the Civilian Public Service program

In order to administer the alternative service program, the three Historic Peace Churches early in the program organized a central office and located it in Washington, D. C. This agency came to be known as the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, more commonly referred to as the NSB. It was the function of this Board to contact Government agencies, especially Selective Service, and to serve as a clearing house for the three Historic Peace Churches and other interested agencies. There were thousands of inquiries for help from individuals who encountered difficulty in getting desired classifications from their local draft boards. Cases of hardship that required discharge and cases of emergency due to illness could be taken up directly with Selective Service through NSB. Also there were constant administrative problems which had to be cleared.

A man classified as a conscientious objector was subject to all of the requirements that a man in the regular military service was subject to. He was compelled to register, to take a physical examination, to appear for induction, to be sent to camp, and be subject to authority while in camp. He had his daily work assigned to him. The length of the day and the week was determined for him, and the amount of furlough time was identical to that of men in military service. He had to get special permission from the camp director for weekend leaves and while on furlough he had to be able to show identification papers.

It was the responsibility of every camp director to send in detailed reports of the number of men in camp,

the number of man-hours of service rendered, the number of days missed by men because of physical illness, the reasons for absence from work, and many other details. Thus, the man who went to a Civilian Public Service camp was subject to the usual military regulations. The leisure time was voluntary. Camp directors and unit leaders were selected by the Church Administrative agencies. The daily work was under the direction of civilian employees of various governmental agencies, such as the Soil Conservation and Forestry Services. The only official contact with the military authorities was through Selective Service in Washington which was the liaison agency between Civilian Public Service and the Government. The operation of the Civilian Public Service program for over five years was a witness to Government officials with whom the agencies dealt.

Questions for discussion

1. Was it wise for Mennonites to engage in a co-operative program of administering Civilian Public Service with the Government?
2. Is it right for Christian people to do compulsory government service without pay?
3. Which churches were responsible for organizing the Civilian Public Service program?
4. Would it have been better for the Christian cause if men had gone to jail rather than co-operate with a conscription program?
5. Was the alternative service program in World War II anything new in the history of American religious freedom?

Reading References

Guy F. Hershberger, **War, Peace, and Nonresistance** (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1944), pp. 166-171.

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WITNESSING OUTSIDE THE MENNONITE CHURCH

"Greater is He that is in you, than He that is in the world." (I John 4:4)

The reputation of the Mennonites

Mennonites are very little known throughout the world in general. Even in our own country most people know little or nothing about the Mennonites, but those who are acquainted with them at all characterize them as Christians who refuse to fight. This general opinion is reflected in the conversation of two passengers recently overheard in the crowded aisle of a railroad train. A young woman and a middle-aged man were talking about things in general and then began discussing religion. The man identified himself as a Nazarene preacher. The young lady said she did not belong to church anywhere but had attended a Mennonite church in the community where she was teaching school. Upon hearing the word "Mennonite" the minister said: "Oh, Mennonite, I know some Mennonites who live in my town. They are fine people, but my, how they hate war." And then as an afterthought he added, "I hate war too, but I can fight if I have to." This conversation was overheard by a young Mennonite Civilian Public Service man while en route to his home. It happened that he was the only man from his church in Civilian Public Service. His pastor and fellow church members were strongly opposed to the doctrine of nonresistance, to the Civilian Public Service program, and ardently supported the war.

Witnessing in the army

In spite of the fact that the Mennonite Church officially takes a stand against participation in war or military service and employment in defense plants,¹ there are those who argued that it was right for Mennonites to participate in these forms of national service. There are those who said that this was a totalitarian war in which everyone was involved, no matter what he did; therefore, they argued, direct participation was no worse than indirect participation. There were those who admitted that war itself was terrible, but that the quickest way to end it was to get in and fight to get it over with. There were those who said that they were no better than the men who did go to war and for that reason they could not let others fight their battles for them. Others stated that they accepted military service because of the influence of their associates. Some said that financial necessity required them to go into regular service. Others saw occupational advantage and a chance to get free training in some skill. Still others felt it their sense of duty, while some felt that they were not good enough Christians to justify their taking a stand as a conscientious objector. There were those who even argued that Mennonites should serve as chaplains in the army, stating that in the army ministers were most needed.

Undoubtedly, the individual soldier, sailor, marine, coast guardsmen, defense-plant worker, or chaplain can testify to the saving power of Jesus Christ and can preach the Gospel, but he dare not urge his listeners or his converts to accept Christ fully and follow Him literally as taught by the Mennonite Church because in so doing he would interfere with the servicemen's line of duty. He would be breaking down army morale.

¹See Appendix IX B, General Conference Statement of Peace Principles, adopted at the General Conference Session in Souderton, Pennsylvania, 1941.

The chief function of a soldier is to fight and to help others to fight. If all Christians in the armed services would literally follow Christ, it would be hard to imagine them manning machine guns, flying bomber planes, throwing hand-grenades, and doing hand-to-hand fighting with bayonets. The Christian witness of a Mennonite boy in regular military service is at best a fragmentary witness, because by virtue of his accepting military service he is a part of a system which, as a Christian, he is trying to condemn. To accept Christ is not merely to accept a theological doctrine or a series of words, expressing a faith in a divine power. It requires a literal following of Christ, walking in His way, and **being** a Christian as well as **believing** a faith. To argue that everybody is in the war, and, therefore, there is no escape from it, is like arguing that everybody is a sinner, and, therefore, all of us might as well sin. To say that war is terrible and that the quicker we get it over with the better it is to accept the argument that we can drive out Satan with Satan and evil with evil. To accept the I-am-no-better argument is to admit that the other person is doing something which is right, that somebody has to fight; in other words, that war and violence are necessary. This the nonresistant Christians refuse to believe. They claim that if all men who profess Christ would refuse to fight there would be no wars; the occasion for them would be removed.

To argue that one fights because one's friends do or because it would be financially difficult to take a position other than that, or to fight because of occupational advantage and free vocational training is to act from selfish motives and from expediency, rather than from grounds of religious principle.

Admitting that religious guidance and help is needed among service men it would not be necessary for chaplains to accept the military uniform, military pay, and all direc-

tion from the military authorities in order to present the gospel message. Of all people, chaplains should remain free and unencumbered servants of God. In order to convert a bartender it is not necessary for a minister to put on the bartender's apron; or get behind the bar and work with the bartender in order to minister to his spiritual needs; neither is it necessary to put on the military uniform to witness effectively for Christ.

The witness of the I-A-O

While the General Conference in its official statement of position¹ on peace, war, military service and patriotism does not approve of either direct military service or non-combatant service, it must be said that the person who takes the I-A-O position is at least technically not violating the doctrine of nonresistance because he is not compelled to take life or engage directly in destruction of life and property. He is, however, an integral part of military life. It is significant to note that most military personnel is, in fact, non-combatant due to the mechanical and scientific nature of modern warfare. General Marshall, Chief of Staff, said that of the 15,000,000 men in service not more than 1,500,000 had been in actual combat. The I-A-O classification is, therefore, largely a technical distinction so far as the army is concerned. There is no question, however, that the I-A-O soldier had a chance to witness against war during his period of service. From the time of his physical examination and induction to the time of his discharge the fact that he was a conscientious objector was clearly noted on his official papers. Also, in the regular routine of duty it was almost impossible not to be known as a conscientious objector. Those who sincerely held to that position likely had a more difficult time than men who went to the Civilian Public Service camps with a group of those who

¹Ibid.

believed similarly. It required courage for the genuinely sincere Christian to manifest his position as a conscientious objector in the army.

According to a study as of December 1, 1944, of all Mennonite men drafted 938, or 15 per cent of the total, were registered as I-A-O. The General Conference was slightly higher, with 18 per cent so classified.

The non-combatant received considerable publicity in the press because of the conspicuousness of his acts of bravery in line of duty. No Mennonite, so far as is known, received a citation for outstanding bravery but a number of non-Mennonite I-A-O's were cited for their valor. A number of press statements referring to conscientious objectors best indicate the witness of the I-A-O's during World War II. A Seventh Day Adventist by the name of Desmond T. Doss, of Lynchburg, Virginia, was given the Congressional medal of honor on October 12, 1945, by President Truman and was credited with saving seventy-five lives in the face of enemy fire. Thirty-eight editorials on conscientious objectors appeared in daily papers following the awarding of this medal to Doss. Not all of these editorials referred to Doss, some had reference to conscientious objectors in general.

The Chicago, Illinois, **Times** said:

News of the past week should make it clearer to all of us that nations as well as individuals must follow the creed of Corporal Doss. Nations must become conscientious objectors to war. Nations are going to be forced to partake in some measure of the high spiritual driving power connoted in such a man as Doss, or face the completely realistic alternative of utter destruction.

Augusta, Georgia, **Chronicle**:

The conscientious objector, that rare, too often maligned person who is unhappiest during periods of war, deserves something said in his behalf. He is scoffed at, looked upon with scorn and sometimes called a coward That the C. O. is not, as a rule, a coward This experience, we believe, proves that

no man is competent to judge what is in another man's conscience.

St. Louis, Missouri, **Globe-Democrat:**

In honoring him with the nation's highest award for gallantry, this country also honors all the sincere conscientious objectors who braved public condemnation to remain true to their convictions.

The Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, **Bulletin:**

The lot of the man with a conscience about war has not been easy, but recognition of one of their number for his valorous conduct resounds to the credit of all others who have served well.

The Newark, New Jersey, **Star-Ledger:**

Now that peace has returned, we owe an expression of tribute to the moral courage of the brave men who risked popular wrath and the sternest ordeals to uphold their honest convictions.

The Carlisle, Pennsylvania, **Sentinel:**

This should go far toward silencing the thoughtless criticism that conscientious objectors as a class are slackers and cowards.

The witness of Civilian Public Service

In all cases before Civilian Public Service projects could be established, it was necessary for representatives of the Mennonite Central Committee to meet with local committees which often consisted of representatives from labor organizations, veterans organizations, and business and professional men's groups. These initial meetings provided a splendid opportunity to interpret the program and religious views of the Mennonite Church. Information was in this way provided for those who had hitherto never coolly and objectively become acquainted with religious objectors.

One of the first contacts which Civilian Public Service men made after being inducted into the service was with the men of the various technical agencies administering Civilian Public Service projects. There were the super-

intendents, foremen, engineers, and staff specialists of the Soil Conservation, Forestry, Farm Security, and Bureau of Reclamation services, and there were the hospital superintendents and their assistants, and in the dairy farm program the county agents and representatives from local farmer's organizations. In the special projects, such as the units of the agriculture colleges, were the faculties of the schools and interested professional men attached to the universities where experiments were carried on.

Service men were more often understanding and appreciative of the position of the conscientious objector than were people in the home communities, including members of Civilian Public Service men's own churches.

This point is illustrated by the attitude of a war veteran who returned to his Wisconsin home to start farming. The veteran applied to the county agent to hire a conscientious objector to work on his farm. Nothing the county agent could say deterred the veteran from wanting a Mennonite boy for his hired man. He insisted that if the C.O. was sincere, he had a right to his belief and that it would not effect their relationship. A Civilian Public Service man was assigned to this man's farm and the two were getting along famously. The county agent made the observation that it was not the veterans who had been doing the fighting who criticized the C.O.'s in his county but those who got only as far as the training camp or those who never left town.

The most convincing evidence to the representatives in the technical agency that the conscientious objectors were sincere was the way they did their day's work, knowing that they were not being paid for it and that they would never be rewarded in any way by the Government. They were also impressed with the constructive use that

the Civilian Public Service men made of their after-work hours. These men attended classes in Bible study, church history, music, bookkeeping, typing, language study, Christian education, mental hygiene, agriculture, relief training, and a wide variety of additional subjects. Those not interested in studying books and theories nevertheless found many of their evenings and weekends devoted to making useful articles in the woodworking shops or by learning to weave rugs and pursue various handcraft activities, or engage in photography. Since this was all on a voluntary basis it showed how the men spent their leisure time in wholesome activity.

One of the most lasting values of any camper's experience will probably be the morning devotions conducted by the entire camp. Where technical agency men lived on the grounds and ate with the Civilian Public Service men these daily devotions and the moments of reverent silence before meals in the woods or fields where the crews were working, made a significant impression upon many of the government representatives. In a number of cases Civilian Public Service men had the satisfaction of seeing men's lives and attitudes changed as a result of the religious influence of the campers. The poet's words were actually borne out, that "fools who came to scoff remained to pray."

The impressions on the public

Civilian Public Service units in various communities meant that there were contacts with merchants, with doctors, with shoemakers, with dentists, with railroad station agents, and with a host of local people in the towns where units were located. Because of the concentration of 50-150 men in most of these units, the purchases and patronages over a period of time amounted to a great deal. It also provided an opportunity for many of the Mennonite boys to make a witness through personal conversation and

through the very character of their behavior while talking with these local business and professional people. In many communities the Civilian Public Service men worked at odd jobs on Saturday afternoons or in the evenings to earn extra money. In this way they had a chance informally to describe their personal background, the church to which they belonged, and something about their religious convictions. All these opportunities provided an occasion to give a witness to the way of Christ.

Perhaps the most significant place of witness was in the local churches where many of the men attended when the Civilian Public Service units were located close to towns. There were many occasions where men sang in church choirs and in one case helped build a retreat ground. Local pastors were often invited to visit the camps and conduct religious services. In this way they had a chance to become acquainted with both the doctrine of nonresistance and its working out in a practical program in time of war.

An illustration of the witness of Civilian Public Service on the churches is the case of one pastor who became an ardent convert to the doctrine of nonresistance as a result of the efforts of one of the campers. A certain Civilian Public Service man had attended the church of this minister over an extended period of time. The two developed a friendship and in the course of the friendship the camper showed this minister the Biblical basis for his own conviction as a conscientious objector to war. In the course of time the pastor became very much convinced of the position, both through conversation with the young C.O. and by reading the literature and restudying the Scriptures that were suggested to him. The pastor announced his conviction on this point to his congregation and said he was prepared to leave if they found his views objectionable. The Civilian Public Service man later

wrote: "Needless to say we from the Civilian Public Service unit were overjoyed to find one of his calibre embrace this doctrine of Jesus which is dear to us."

Another Civilian Public Service man relates the experience of witnessing to a university student whom he met at a social function. In the course of time the young lady, through numerous conversations and intensive study as a result of a questioning mind, became convinced of the validity of this Scriptural teaching and fully accepted it. This girl had up to this time no firm religious conviction, but said that her religion had been the Golden Rule. The Civilian Public Service man states that not only was he able to help this young lady strengthen her faith in God and her acquaintance with Jesus Christ, but in the process had to clarify his own thinking because of the challenge that was put to him by the questions that were asked. The incident has a romantic touch in that what started as a friendship over the discussion of a controversial subject, later developed into romance and ended in a happy marriage.

A Civilian Public Service quartet was asked to come to a large Baptist church in an Eastern city for a Sunday evening program. When the director of music in this church heard that a quartet of conscientious objectors was to sing in her church, she refused to attend the meeting. The pastor seemed unable to persuade her to be more tolerant. However, when the hour for the meeting came, the choir director was there and listened to the men sing. As part of the program the men introduced themselves and stated what they were doing and why.

Following the program the music director in question was the first to come to the front and speak to the boys. Her first word was an apology for her previously prejudiced notion of conscientious objectors. She asked the boys whether they could spend some time after the serv-

ice in discussing the total position as conscientious objectors with interested church members. A meeting was arranged in the church parlors and approximately sixty people remained for several hours. A steady stream of questions was asked about the Mennonite Church, its history, the basis of its beliefs, and the work of the men in relief and Civilian Public Service. This woman was so impressed that she insisted that the quartet order any music for their quartet from a down-town store and charge it to her account. The men were invited back to this church on a number of occasions as well as into the homes of the church members. One of the leading members was a judge in the city courts and a high-ranking official in the American Legion. The church as a whole was so deeply impressed with the quality of the music as well as the character of the members of the quartet that it asked the quartet to provide all the special Lenten music at its next pre-Easter season.

Other instances of witnessing to the public are illustrated in cases such as the Civilian Public Service man on a dairy farm in California. He noted that there was no church in the community and, therefore, no opportunity for children to attend Sunday School. With permission from his employer and the help of his employer's wife he secured the local school building for a place of meeting and arranged to hold Sunday School regularly for the unchurched children in the area. He carried on this program with the help of other Civilian Public Service men and their wives as teachers to the satisfaction and thanks of the people in the community.

An interesting illustration of the effectiveness of the witness of a Civilian Public Service man is told in the case of a Wisconsin farmer who hired a camper. This farmer was not in the habit of attending church services regularly. The Civilian Public Service man wished to

attend church, but had no means of getting there except walking. After a few Sundays the employer volunteered to take him to church and then returned to his farm. As time went on the farmer stayed on the church grounds and waited until the service was over, and then returned home with his helper. After some time the farmer went into the church building and waited there for services to be over. The farmer became interested in what was going on and later became converted and joined this church. Not only did he become a regular attendant, but he also succeeded in bringing the rest of his family into church membership. It is also reported that several others among the farmer's relatives were led to regular church attendance by means of this one Civilian Public Service man's efforts.

Conscientious Objectors were sometimes concerned about what the attitude of their former employers and employee associates would be toward them after they were discharged. Some were refused employment, but most of the Mennonite discharged Civilian Public Service men again found employment in their old jobs. One discharged man discovered that after several months on his old job he was to be released to make room for returning GI's. The boss tried to find work but after the second GI returned there was no longer opportunity to use the Civilian Public Service man so he was laid off. The Civilian Public Service man accepted the decision without any feeling of hatred or coolness toward anyone, believing that God would guide his future steps. He explained that he knew his job was not protected by the G.I. Bill of Rights and that his decision had been made several years earlier. This straightforward position and gracious attitude on the part of the Mennonite young man, who incidentally had a family to support, touched the consciences of a few of the men in places of management as well as that of the returning GI's. It turned out that two days

after the GI was supposed to return to work he wrote a letter stating that he did not want to return to his old job if that meant removing the Mennonite young man from his job . His returning meant that, so he did not return.

In mental hospitals

On January 1, 1946, there were approximately 1,000 men in Mennonite Central Conference maintained Civilian Public Service hospital units and training schools. During the war more than 1,500 men have had actual mental hospital experience and have learned something about the problems of caring for mental patients. There is no other form of Civilian Public Service work which has had such widespread recognition as to the effectiveness of Civilian Public Service service as has mental hospital work. Almost in every hospital without exception superintendents and impartial observers have stated that the quality of attendant service has been noticeably improved by Civilian Public Service attendants.

From the patients themselves come a number of spontaneous testimonies. The following is a letter written to the Mennonite Central Committee by a patient. As a result of this letter an appeal was sent to the home churches for Bibles. The response to the appeal brought five hundred Bibles to the patients throughout the institution. Fred says:

The ward on which I am has been most efficiently and congenially supervised by two members of the Mennonite Church Since I have met and been in close association with them, my attitude toward the Spirit of God and to life in general has taken a decided change. I am beginning to see the light trickling into where all was dark before.

In a later letter this same patient writes:

As I write at this moment I gaze out over the golf links from the window of my ward and I see the omnipresence of the Spirit of God and realize that He alone can help me It im-

mediately inspires thoughts of you boys in my mind and causes me to praise my Father in heaven for the wonderful event of meeting you to be His gift to me. May all men have the veil lifted from their eyes and see you men as you are. You are individually and collectively blessed with a cleanliness which is reflected mainly in your attitude toward other men. It is a full and sincere realization of the Father and Son attitude.

From another hospital a patient writes:

Believe me, I can never repay these two [CPS attendants] and their fellow CPS men for all their kindnesses, thoughtfulness and consideration to me during my stay at the hospital. They not only tended to my physical needs but they imparted to me a renewed faith in God and did much to help me back on the road to health. They gave unsparingly of their time and made life a lot easier for me during my convalescence. I have never met a finer group of fellows, imbued with the spirit and teachings of Jesus Christ. I firmly believe that I owe my miraculous recovery, to a major degree, to their kind administrations and guidance.

The mental hospital work has enlarged the vision of most men who have served in them. It acquainted them with the nature of mental illness and the effectiveness of love as a power in restoring mental health.

So effective has been the work in the mental hospitals and so challenging the need that a group of Civilian Public Service men have organized the Mental Hygiene Program, which has the sponsorship of outstanding American leaders, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Owens J. Roberts, Felix Morley, Pearl Buck, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Arthur Morgan, Rufus Jones, and Clarence Pickett. The Historic Peace Church service agencies gave this program its initial start.

As a result of it the standards of care for mental patients in state institutions will undoubtedly be raised throughout the whole country. Dr. Karl Menninger, the Topeka, Kansas, author and nationally known psychiatrist recently said:

What I am looking for is men of that type of character and life philosophy which will enable them to be proud and happy

in a task which requires so much maturity and so much patience and so much of something that I know no better word for than simply love. That is the kind of men we want and it is the kind of men that I am led to believe that you and some of your associates have worked with and trained.

Menninger refers to Civilian Public Service men who have had mental-hospital experience and whom he would like to secure as attendants for men in the Menninger Clinic.

Public health projects

The Civilian Public Service program has introduced the Mennonite Church to conditions and problems in the deep South. A new venture in alternative service was launched when a public health project was opened at Crestview, Florida, in co-operation with the Church of the Brethren and the Mennonite Central Conference. Later separate Mennonite units were established at Mulberry, Florida and at Gulfport, Mississippi. The service that the men in these units rendered was under the direction of the Public Health Departments of the respective states. This work introduced Mennonite men to conditions of poor health, poverty, lack of education, lack of religious services, and, in general, the needs of constructive social service and Christian witnessing. Also, it provided an opportunity for Mennonite men to discover the deep chasm between the white and black races in the South.

After working hours, men in the Civilian Public Service units made efforts to witness to the needy people in the area in various ways. They gave assistance where help was needed because of a shortage of workers. They helped poor Negro and poor white families to improve living conditions. They improved school buildings, helped provide a pure water supply, improved sanitary conditions in schools, and provided wholesome recreation for neglected young people's groups. In addition, they developed a program of summer Bible schools. For this new

workers, both men and women, had to be recruited for the summer months. All in all, the public health projects unfolded a new vision of Christian service and presented a new opportunity for Christian witnessing. Thousands of homes and individuals who had never before heard of Christians refusing to participate in war were now made conscious that the way of Christ and the way of war were irreconcilable.

Mennonite witness in jail

There were approximately sixty Mennonites who served sentences in one of the Federal prisons in the United States as a result of their refusal to go to war. A branch of Mennonites located chiefly in Pennsylvania known as the "Wenger" Mennonites chose as a matter of policy to go to prison rather than to compromise with the government in administering the program of Civilian Public Service or of the non-combatant position. Their total number was between forty and fifty. The remaining number who went to jail were largely those who were unable to get a IV-E classification and for that reason had no other alternative to maintain their absolute position against participation in war. These men served full sentences of from three to five years and, in at least one case, the man was fined in addition. Some of these men were permitted to take paroles and complete their sentence as parolees. This alternative to war was certainly a protest and in that sense a witness against evil. Had the Civilian Public Service program not been provided for by the church, undoubtedly, a much larger number of Mennonite men would have gone to jail.

In addition to the small number of Mennonites in jail, there were approximately 300 other religious objectors plus 2,200 Jehovah's Witnesses. There were 1,300 other arrests and commitments to Federal prisons because of various types of Selective Service law violations. These,

however, were not religious objectors but were, for the most part, draft evaders who were caught in their own tracks.

Questions for discussion

1. What is the most characteristic thing about Mennonites in the eyes of the outside world?
2. How did the Civilian Public Service program introduce new Christian ideas to the public?
3. Did the conscientious objectors in World War II make a significant witness against war?
4. What opportunities for witnessing did public health projects afford?
5. What was the attitude of the men in the armed services toward the conscientious objectors?

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THE WITNESS WITHIN THE MENNONITE CHURCH

"If the salt have lost his savor, where-with shall it be salted?" (Matt. 5:8)

Witnessing begins at home

Ordinarily when we think of witnessing it is in connection with the foreign mission field or to strangers and to people at a distance. The fact is that witnessing applies to the home community and those among our own number as well as to strangers at a distance. In other words, witnessing, like charity, begins at home. The record of

the Mennonite Church in World War II was a witness unto itself as well as a witness to the world. The degree to which members of the church were loyal to its teachings is a testimony to itself as well as to others.

The witness of the Mennonite church to itself

In time of war as in time of peace the true church continues to preach the full gospel of Jesus Christ and His message of salvation, but in time of war the teachings of Christ, as stressed by the Mennonites, make it stand out in sharp contrast to the ways of the world and to the teaching and preaching of most other Christian churches. Mennonites had both an opportunity and a responsibility for witnessing in World War II; an opportunity because the Government recognized their religious convictions against participating in military service; and a responsibility to be true to the faith of their fathers in the light of this opportunity. In this war Mennonites had a legally recognized choice between participation and non-participation in military service, something which they never had in previous wars. It was a time of testing for the Mennonites, somewhat similar to that of the Israelites in the time of Joshua when he asked his people to "choose ye this day whom ye will serve." How did the drafted Mennonite men choose to serve?

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF GENERAL CONFERENCE WITH ALL OTHER
MENNONITE DRAFT CLASSIFICATIONS

Group	IV-E		I-A-O		I-A	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
General Conference Mennonites	690	27	461	18	1,384	55
All Mennonites	3,245	46	1,026	14	2,806	40

The above figures, as of December 1, 1944,¹ indicate that during World War II 40 per cent of all Mennonites chose to do regular military service, while in the General Conference 55 per cent chose full service. This figure plus the 18 per cent that accepted partial military service means that 73 per cent of General Conference drafted men accepted the military uniform and whatever else that implies. This means that a large percentage of Mennonites are not in agreement with the historic teachings of their church on the peace principle. Let us see what witness was given by those who accepted the Scriptural teachings as held by the Mennonite Church.

¹The draft census was taken as of December 1, 1944, but the percentages remained about the same to the end of the war.

TABLE 2

DRAFT STATUS OF GENERAL CONFERENCE MEN BY DISTRICT CONFERENCE

District	Total Membership	Number Congregations	Draft Classifications						Total Drafted	II-C	Other	Total	Total Registered
			IV-E	1-A-O	1-A	Per cent	Per cent						
Western	12,328	62	436	43	180	18	403	39	1,019	870	471	1,344	2,363
Northern	5,030	30	112	33	89	26	143	41	344	434	107	541	885
Pacific	2,876	17	40	18	63	27	127	55	230	89	59	148	378
Middle	5,523	19	77	14	97	18	367	68	541	143	158	301	842
Eastern	3,690	26	25	6	32	8	344	86	401	123	138	261	662
Totals	29,447	154	690	—	461	—	1,384	—	2,535	1,659	936	2,595	5,130

Information for this study was secured for every General Conference Church.

TABLE 3

DRAFT CENSUS SUMMARY OF ALL MENNONITES*

By Mennonite Branches

Denomination	IV-E		1-A-O		1-A		Total Number Drafted
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	
Old Order Mennonite	18	100.0	0	00.0	0	00.0	18
Old Order Amish	325	97.0	1	00.3	9	02.7	335
Church of God in Christ	128	93.4	4	02.9	5	03.7	137
Conservative Amish	104	75.2	7	05.1	14	10.7	125
Hutterian	18	72.0	1	04.0	6	24.0	25
Evangelical Mennonite Brethren	65	66.4	16	16.3	17	17.3	98
Old Mennonite	1,588	60.9	263	10.1	755	29.0	2,606
Krimmer Mennonite Brethren	34	39.5	28	32.6	24	27.9	86
Mennonite Brethren	196	39.4	130	26.2	171	34.4	497
General Conference	690	27.2	461	18.2	1,384	54.6	2,535
Central Conference	21	24.7	13	15.3	51	60.0	85
Defenseless	16	13.7	36	31.5	64	55.8	116
Mennonite Brethren in Christ	42	10.2	66	15.9	306	73.9	414
Totals	2,806	39.7	1,026	14.4	3,245	45.9	7,086

*As of December 1, 1944

Witnessing informally

Not all of the Mennonite Church's witness during the war was in an organized form. In each local community there were testimonies to the Christian way of life as traditionally taught by the Mennonite Church. In numerous places there were scenes of bitterness and of hatred; and some acts of violence on the part of people opposed to conscientious objectors. These situations offered an opportunity to show love, courage, and kindness instead of backbiting and retaliation with bitterness. Such evidence of Christian witnessing may have far-reaching significance in the future and may be remembered long after the war.

There were Mennonite school teachers who either voluntarily resigned their positions or were compelled to resign because of their conscientious convictions against war. There were business men who suffered financial losses because their sons went to Civilian Public Service. There were numerous men who were unable to get their jobs back after having served in Civilian Public Service. There were individual Mennonites who were abused and had property defaced by those who despised conscientious objectors. Even within the Mennonite Church there were those who spoke bitterly against those conscientiously opposed to war. Many individual Mennonites and some Mennonite congregations refused to support the Civilian Public Service program. Nevertheless, many men stood firm and witnessed to their Lord, notwithstanding the discrimination and the unpopularity of their position at the time.

Two young Mennonite men in medical school further illustrate the witnessing of Mennonites during World War II. These men were firm in their convictions against participation in war. Medical school authorities tried to convince them that to join either of the army or navy

medical programs would guarantee their freedom from actual fighting and in addition would reduce personal expenses and provide adequate financial income from Government sources. Furthermore, they argued that any possible discrimination in medical school as conscientious objectors would thereby be avoided. The men, however, acted on grounds of principle rather than on grounds of expediency; to them it was not a matter of saving money or of avoiding unpopularity. They were unyielding in their faith and stood before the authorities like Daniel before the King. Because they did not accept financial offers that would have come to them from military training programs, it cost one man about \$5,000 to take his stand, and the other about \$8,000. The men stuck to their position and graduated from medical school, one with high honors, and both with a clear conscience.

What took place within the family of Mennonites?

Through the Mennonite Central Committee seventeen Mennonite groups and several affiliated churches, like the Brethren in Christ, the Hutterian Brethren, and the Missionary Church, worked harmoniously together throughout the war to witness to "the better way" to which Paul referred in I Corinthians 13, the way that believes that the power of God's love is great enough to overcome all evil.

The Civilian Public Service program provided an opportunity for Mennonites to learn from each other. First, they had to live with each other in close quarters and under varying circumstances for over four years. As a result of this close contact and the need for working together, studying together, and worshiping together, Mennonites of various groups came to respect each other's differences. Through conversation and discussion, they learned much from one another. Those who in their thinking had moved far to the left of traditional Mennonite religious princi-

ples and customs began to see real value in such practices as simplicity, distinctiveness in dress, and non-conformity to the social practices of the world.

On the other hand, the more conservative and isolated groups discovered that spiritual quality could not be identified merely with external things such as uniform dress and formal regulations. They discovered that genuine truth was a matter of the spirit, something which needed to be possessed from within rather than regulated entirely from without. In this way the family of Mennonites was more closely bound together into a fellowship of the spirit. The men who had the privilege of this experience are minded to work with one another in the days ahead.

In administering the program of Civilian Public Service it was also necessary for church leaders to meet frequently with one another. The annual meetings of the Mennonite Central Committee, when representatives of various Mennonite groups assemble for two-day meetings, are always experiences of genuine, spiritual enrichment and religious significance. The total result is that American Mennonites are closer together today than they have been at any time in the history of America. Thus, the trials and the problems of the church in World War II served to bring spiritual unity to American Mennonites. The ancient truth expressed by David (Psalm 4:1), "Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress," is again confirmed.

An awakened Christian faith

Perhaps the greatest single merit of the Civilian Public Service program was that it permitted the church to go **with** its men to camp. This meant that the church could minister to the spiritual needs of its members even though drafted and away from home. By virtue of the administrative arrangement the church had full responsi-

bility for the time of the men in camps after the end of a working day or week. The church through the Mennonite Central Committee was responsible for the selection of its camp staffs, which consisted of the camp director, the educational director, the business manager, a nurse-matron, and generally a lady-dietician in each camp. Here care was exercised that the staff members chosen were concerned with religious problems and with maintaining a wholesome spiritual environment.

From the beginning of Civilian Public Service the religious and educational aspect of the program emphasized the importance of Civilian Public Service men knowing why they were in camp. This resulted in a study of the Scriptures, the doctrines, the history, and the principles of the Mennonite Church. Being thrown into close contact with Mennonites of all different branches, and with a sprinkling of a variety of non-Mennonite individuals, our men were forced to do serious thinking. Because it cost something to serve in Civilian Public Service, many men were compelled to evaluate their decision to see if they really believed in the doctrine of nonresistance and to see if they were willing to pay whatever price it would cost to maintain it. As a result of the period of service in camp, the thinking that resulted from the contacts, and the discussions and the talks that were given by visitors to the camps, most men seriously re-examined their faith. Unfortunately, there were also those who were spiritually and mentally unmoved.

A witness of the former is given in the following personal testimony by one of these draftees.

Civilian Public Service has afforded an opportunity to strengthen our faith in God. This did not happen inevitably nor has it happened to everyone who came to CPS; it is true, nonetheless, that the opportunity was there and presented itself in several rather unique ways; a large number of men came into CPS because of their faith in God and their belief in His ways; that brought together groups of people that provided

stimulus for one another for growth in the faith. Men were thrown upon their resources spiritually, and soon we found how weak our own strength becomes; this drove many of us to the source of all strength, and it strengthened our faith in God. It became evident very soon that in CPS we had to stand on our own feet spiritually, and this too had its effect in deepening our faith and strengthening our convictions. Moreover, we found many occasions where it became required of us to give reason for the "hope that is within us"; this helped us greatly to clarify our own faith, especially as we began to analyze it into its component parts and learned to declare it in our own words. Again, we found within our groups other strong men, who helped us to find our own strength and who challenged us to lay hold with greater firmness upon the resources of God. That which was not genuine was soon discovered, and that which was sham would not long stand the test of time; hence we were helped to cleanse ourselves and to purify our motives. This helped us to a deeper faith, in God which could find expression in the everyday activities with our fellowmen.

Gaining perspective

Because men had to do without pay for two, three, and four, or more years, many learned to discover that money and the material things that money can buy were not as important as they had once thought. Because they were of necessity deprived of these things, they came to see that life could be rich and meaningful even though not all things could be bought and although many of earth's treasures could not be stored up. This fact led many men to re-examine the meaning of occupation or one's life work. They began to see that occupation of service, such as the work of the minister, the teacher, the social worker, the doctor, and the missionary were in many ways more challenging than were strictly money-making occupations motivated by a desire for money and material goods. Many, also, saw farming in a new light, as a service in partnership with God, rather than as a mere means of earning a living.

Unfortunately, not all men gained new perspective with regard to material values nor with respect to the

deeper implication of a Christian faith. To illustrate this the incident comes to our attention of a number of men in one of the hospital units who had been bitterly criticized and treated in a disrespectful manner by other hospital employees, including the supervisors. Then came the day when the men were discharged. There was a shortage of help in the hospital and the hospital authorities pled with Civilian Public Service men to continue until other help could be found. The Civilian Public Service men, however, answered that because they had not been appreciated before they did not see why they should remain for further service now. In other words, these men overlooked an opportunity of returning good for evil or of overcoming hate with love. Here was an opportunity of voluntarily going the second mile, but the opportunity was rejected.

Developing leadership

One of the most inspiring aspects of the Civilian Public Service witness was the way the program developed leadership. During a large part of the war practically all of the fifty units were staffed with drafted Civilian Public Service men. In other words, men did not have to be hired and paid for rendering this service to their country. They were drafted without pay and voluntarily organized and administered the work. Many of the men who held administrative positions in base camps, hospital units, special projects, or at the central headquarters, were men in their early twenties. These men had responsibilities equal to those of the pastors of large churches or the superintendents of schools. They had to keep accurate records for Selective Service and for the Mennonite Central Committee. They had to provide religious-life programs, look after the educational interests of the men in camp, solve public relations problems, and handle cases of discipline. The splendid over-all record of Civilian Public Service administration is evidence of the calibre of

work done by the men in these positions. The leadership developed in Civilian Public Service will find opportunity for service in the Mennonite church of the future. The church will thus realize a worthwhile return on its Civilian Public Service investment.

A challenge to the church

Modern Mennonites had almost forgotten that it costs something to witness for Christ. When we were given the opportunity of an alternative service program in World War II, at our own expense, it was a test of sincerity in our belief of the doctrine of nonresistance. It was a question of loving our faith enough to be willing to pay whatever the price it cost to maintain it. It is to the everlasting credit of the church that it accepted the challenge and decided to finance the program as an evidence of its sincerity regardless of the financial cost. No one knew how great the cost would actually be. Had the church known in advance, many might have shrunk from the responsibility. As the war continued and the number of drafted men became larger, the cost increased correspondingly.

It is worthwhile noting that the total cost of the program, amounting to over two million dollars, was financed entirely by voluntary gifts. A suggested quota of 50 cents per month per member served as a yardstick for giving. The General Conference did not provide its full share of the expenses but the total giving of all groups together covered the cost of maintaining and operating the Civilian Public Service program. The cost at the height of the program ranged from \$60,000 to \$70,000 a month. The total for Civilian Public Service in 1945 was \$824,993. In addition to the cash gifts there were generous contributions of canned goods for the camp dining halls.

There was also a large amount of spontaneous and unrecorded giving. Parents and friends supplied their

sons and relatives with cash, clothing, and sundry supplies. Women's societies sent service kits and mended for the men in camps. Families at home took care of livestock, land, and business where drafted men had been taken away from such enterprises. Wives and children were assisted by families, friends, or by the congregations or the district church conference of the drafted men. This response to the challenge that war put to the Mennonite Church provided an excellent occasion for testing Mennonite church members' willingness to fulfill Paul's injunction to Christians to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2).

One brother in a family of two boys was drafted while the other brother remained on the farm. The one remaining at home shared his earnings with his drafted brother, thus dividing the burden of the one in camp. Churches in many cases sent monthly cash allowances to the members, in addition to occasional extra gifts. Many Mennonite churches as well as conference groups have made provision for re-establishing their men in jobs and with financial gifts or loans in their home communities upon discharge.

Questions for discussion

1. Is it possible to uphold the Mennonite peace principles by serving in the regular army?
2. Should a Mennonite accept non-combatant service in view of his opportunity to serve under a church-directed program?
3. Where do you think the Mennonite church made its most effective peace witness during the recent war?
4. Is it possible for the church to give effective spiritual guidance to men in military service?
5. In the event of permanent conscription, should Mennonites have an alternative service program?

6. Do you know of incidents where Christians witnessed effectively for Christ and for peace during the war?

Reading Reference

Guy Hershberger, **War, Peace, and Nonresistance** (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania: The Herald Press, 1944), pp. 233-240.

Three Years in Civilian Public Service (Akron, Penn. Mennonite Central Committee).

Albert Gaeddert, "What We Have Learned from CPS," **Mennonite Life** (July, 1946).

CHAPTER IV

Living the Peace Testimony

INTRODUCTION

Thus far we have been thinking about the Scriptural teaching as it relates to war and peace. We have surveyed the applications which the Mennonites made to these teachings in the four hundred years of their history. Then we considered the peace witness made by young men of draft age in World War II. Now, finally, we come to ourselves. What does all this mean to us? If what has been said is to mean anything, it must mean something in the living of our lives today. This way of living and thinking must be more than a beautiful memory; it must become a living experience. It must become a testimony in the world in which we live. Having considered the "faith of our fathers," we shall think now of our own faith. In the pages which follow we shall begin within the person (Section 1); then we shall move out into his relationships (Section 2); and, finally, we shall consider the building of a peaceful world (Section 3).

ESTABLISHING PEACE WITHIN

What is peace?

We can define peace negatively as the absence of turmoil, disturbance, and disharmony. Positively, we say that peace refers to qualities of calmness, quietness, and harmony. When, for example, we think of peaceful waters, we think of a smooth, calm surface where the waters are undisturbed by high winds. But when the waters are in a state of turmoil, and the waves beat high, that is the very opposite of peace. Now peace can be ap-

plied not only to bodies of water, but to the lives of people. The Bible tells us that peace can exist on the inside of our lives. That is, we can have calmness, quietness, and harmony within our souls. Sometimes, we feel as though there were a civil war going on within us, where our various desires, motives, and loyalties are at war with one another. There are other times when we feel a deep sense of peace. Paul, in writing to his friends, prays that this inner peace may keep them night and day (Phil. 4:7).

There is another kind of peace of which the Bible speaks; it is the peace that exists in our relations with other people. Yet it is still characterized by the same qualities of calmness, quietness, and harmony. It is at times when people fully understand each other, when there is a feeling of good will and friendship, that there is peace in human relationships. It was the concern of Jesus that there shall be peace not only on the inside but also on the outside. Our lives are to have such a quality that there will be calmness, quietness, and harmony both within and without.

Now this quality of life comes into the world from God. When Paul prayed for peace to be with his friends, this is the way he put it: "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7). It was the peace of God of which he was speaking. That is the source of this quality of life which makes for peace. Nowhere but in God does perfect peace exist. Nowhere but in God does one behold perfect calmness and harmony, both within and without. Christians know this to be true, for they have seen it in Jesus Christ who is the Word made flesh.

Peace within and peace without

Never before has the world so desperately sought peace as in our own day. The statesmen are saying, "It is

our inflexible purpose to insure that the peace of the world will never again be disturbed." But men must realize that this which men are seeking does not now exist within the world, nor can it be achieved by man's unaided efforts. Peace, that quality of life and spirit which issues in harmony both within and without, must come from God. The only way that peace can ever begin in human relationships is to begin first in human hearts. It was a former president who said, "Peace is not made in documents, but in the hearts of men." Peace is not something we can legislate. It is a quality of life and spirit which must be received from God into the human heart.

That is why we begin our discussion of the peace testimony by saying that we must start within the human heart. For if peace is made in the hearts of men, so is war. And the fact that we have witnessed one of the most diabolical wars in human history is only half of the tragedy. The other half is that this war which was waged on the outside was first of all waged within. What we are trying to say is simply this: Men whose hearts have not received the peace of God within, cannot be expected to order peaceful human relations. The war and turmoil which we have seen without have been but a reflection of the war and turmoil which have existed within. Moreover, if we are to bring a peace testimony to the world and to every phase of life, it must be the reflection of that peace which we have already received within from God.

Personal commitment to Jesus Christ

Paul believed that this quality of spirit which is within God is available to us through Jesus Christ. As far as Paul was concerned, there was only one way to lay hold of the peace of God, and that was to yield yourself so completely to the loving, redemptive spirit of Christ that you could say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ

liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). Let us put this emphatically—We will never succeed as Christian peacemakers unless Christ does dwell within us, and unless we have committed ourselves to Him without reservation. Everything that has been said in these pages has assumed this. It is the great cornerstone upon which the whole structure rests. What we believe about love in human relations grows out of a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and His way of life.

It is not enough to agree to a set of ideas—even the ideas here presented. What we are saying is that we should **commit** ourselves to them, give ourselves without reserve or qualification. To commit ourselves to God and Jesus Christ is to say something like this: "God, I am ready to put myself into your hands. Use the talents, money, and time which I have in such a way as will be in harmony with Your will. All the decisions of major importance in my life which I need to make will be made in terms of what You want me to do. When I fail, show me where I am wrong and lead me to the right path."

Our reason for bringing up a matter so elemental as this is precisely that it is so easy to assume that you have committed your life to Christ when in fact, you have not done it. You were undoubtedly born into a heritage of Christian teaching. The ideas of the Christian faith are familiar to you. You accept them and believe that they are true. Yet, you have not committed your whole life to them. This way of life is at the circumference and not at the center of your being. So there come times in our experience when we must consciously decide what we are going to do with this heritage of Christian teaching which has surrounded us. So often Christianity is the flag under which we sail, but it is not the rudder which steers our course. So, we say it again, we must begin by consciously committing our lives to Jesus Christ.

As we have seen in previous sections, this position of love in human relations, this firm refusal to take human life in any way, has been and still is a minority position. However, it must be said that there is a growing conviction on the part of many Christians that taking human life is not consistent with the teaching of Jesus. But we can still count on it that many of our friends will not see it the way we do. Even our school teachers and community leaders will misunderstand us. Nevertheless, we know that throughout history the world has been blessed by consecrated, God-guided minorities. To be in a minority is not a disgrace. A minority which is guided by God, we can still feel sure that we are making a contribution which the world may not even recognize.

The great danger, however, is that we shall not be thoroughly committed to the convictions of this Christian minority. For if you have put your life completely into the hands of God, you will not need to fear the consequences of your belief.

Discipline in the life of the Spirit

We are all very human creatures. We make commitments easily, and we forget them easily. Our spiritual lives may burn into a fierce heat, but soon the flame will lower; and there will be only a few smoldering embers left to keep alive the commitments which we have made. The stern fact is that we need to be disciplined in the life of the spirit. We need constant spiritual renewal through personal fellowship with God.

To do this we must learn to see the invisible in human life. Too much of our daily living consists of experiences which we can have through the five major senses. We are fast becoming a generation of materialists. If the peace of God is to remain within the human heart, we must learn to undergird the whole of life with a solid, spiritual reality. Paul said: "While we look not at

the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians 4:18).

Somewhere I read this old fable. A spider once slid down a long silken thread which had been attached high above to the rafters of a barn. Having slid down the thread, he established a new web on a lower level. There he caught many flies and grew sleek and prosperous. One day while wandering around the web, he chanced to look up and saw that silken thread stretch up into the unseen. "What is that for!" he exclaimed and snapped the thread off. Instantly his web collapsed and he was without a home. So do our lives collapse when we cut off our contact with life's invisible realities.

If we are to become peacemakers in the deepest Christian sense, if we are to bring a peace testimony to the world, we must be disciplined in the life of the spirit. We must form regular habits of prayer, Bible reading, Bible study, meditation, and thinking. Most of us are too hit-and-miss with these spiritual requirements. Little wonder that we find ourselves losing the "peace which passeth understanding." We need spiritual nourishment as well as we need physical nourishment. We would not think of going through the day without eating, but we are altogether too prone to go through the day without praying.

We must broaden our prayer experiences. They must include adoration, confession, intercession, thanksgiving, petition, and submission. We must see to it that our prayer life includes all of these. Again, it was Paul who said, "Use every kind of prayer" (Eph. 6:18—Good-speed). Using one without the others will prevent us from getting the most out of our prayer life.

Fellowship in the church

In these days it is a popular form of indoor sport to hurl criticism and abuse at the church. Of course, we make no claim for the absolute perfection of the church. We believe as did the apostle: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God" (I Peter 4:17). We ought to do all within our power to make the church a vital power in proclaiming salvation unto all men. For this task the church needs, not abuse and criticism, but loyalty.

Having said all that needs to be said about the ineffectiveness of the church in our time, we need also to remind ourselves that the church has, in spite of all its failures, perpetuated the name of Christ for nearly twenty centuries. It has carried out its great commission to the extent that today His Way is known by people throughout the entire world. One would hate to think what this world would be like without these centuries of Christian influence, which were made possible by no other institution than the church.

However, it is not necessary to make a defense of the church. We are merely stating the fact that if we are to maintain the peace of God within our hearts, we need the sustaining fellowship of others who are seeking the same goals and who hold to the same ideals as we. We said earlier that our convictions of love in human relations and our firm refusal to take human life in any form are likely to place us in a minority position. At the same time we must not get the impression that no one else is going to think on these matters as we do. We believe that there is a growing interest in this way of living. So, those who are like-minded in their total allegiance to Jesus Christ can draw themselves into a fellowship of those who are seekers of the way. Thus can we sustain and help one another in the faith. It is not a matter, then, of

standing completely alone, but of allying yourself with a fellowship of seekers and believers. One wonders whether the church has fully appreciated the depth of power that exists in groups. We concern ourselves overmuch with getting a crowd to attend meetings. But there is a difference between a crowd and a fellowship. A fellowship may be small. Jesus gathered around him twelve men. Of course, he did not neglect the crowd, and neither should the local church. We have yet to explore the possibilities of utilizing the idea of fellowship. Having small groups throughout the church which assemble for prayer, meditation, and seeking can undergird a church with vitality. What is more, finding yourself in the fellowship of one of those groups will strengthen you in your faith. After all, one can feel quite alone in a crowd. It was Jesus who said: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). Part of the responsibility of the church is to make a strengthening fellowship available to the individual.

Our first task, then, in living the peace testimony is to establish peace within ourselves. That quality of life and spirit which is within God must enter into us and must remain there by our personal commitment to Christ, by our discipline in the life of the spirit, and by the sustaining fellowship of the church.

For thought and discussion

1. Where must we begin in this matter of living the peace testimony?
2. How could Jesus be calm as he stood in Pilate's court (Matt. 27:1-31)? Why did He not yield to the demands of the disciples to call down fire from heaven, in Luke 9:51-56?
3. What can you do when you find that there is an attitude of anger or resentment growing within you to-

ward someone else? Is it Christlike to be angry at people?

4. What does it mean to say that Christ lives within us? What kind of living will we do if Christ does live within us? Are we ever saved if this is not true of us?
5. Is God more real to you today than He was a year ago? If not, what are you going to do about it?
6. How many times a day do you think about God? Read the little booklet, **The Game with Minutes**, by Frank Laubach (Macalester Park Publishing Co., Saint Paul, Minnesota).
7. Why is it important for you to establish systematic habits of prayer? Read **Ways of Praying**, by Muriel Lester (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn).
8. Is the majority always right? Is the minority always right? How can you tell which group is right?
9. What is the importance of fellowship in the Christian Church?
10. What can be done to start small groups within the church for fellowship, prayer, and the sharing of thoughts? Would that strengthen the life of the church?

BUILDING PEACEFUL PERSONAL RELATIONS

Fortified with a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, a disciplined life of the spirit, and the sustaining strength of a Christian fellowship, we go forth to build peaceful personal relationships. Having received the peace of God within, we are under obligation to establish it without. Peaceful relations must exist between ourselves and God, and between ourselves and our fellowman. So Jesus summarized all the law and the prophets in this two-fold relationship: love to God and love to man (Mark 12:29). Peace, then, is a quality of life and spirit which is in God and is available to us through Jesus

Christ and manifests itself in the whole network of human relations.

Life is made up of a multitude of relationships; and as time goes on, these relationships become more numerous and complex. It is no longer possible for us to live isolated lives. Think for a moment of all the relationships which the average person has in the course of a single day. There are those relationships which you have with your parents, with your brothers and sisters, with your friends and with your teachers or your pastor. Allow your mind to continue naming relationships, and you will see how large an order we are trying to fill when we try to build peaceful personal relationships.

Moreover, this is the area in which so many of the problems of our society arise. Pick up any newspaper, and you will see at once that it is filled with difficulties which exist in the field of human relationships. A study was made at Harvard University of 4,400 men who had lost their jobs in various industries. The purpose of the study was to determine the reason that these men lost their jobs. It was not, as one might suppose, due to any lack of technical skill. But in 62 per cent of the cases, the trouble was due to the fact that they were not able to get along with other people. That illustrates what a great problem we are facing.

Now one who has the peace of God dwelling within his heart ought to have some contribution to make to that field of human life. He is in a unique position to infuse a new spirit into the field of human relationships. That, at any rate, was the burden of Paul's message in the sixth chapter of Ephesians when he went through the whole gamut of human relationships, as they existed at that time, and pointed out that being a Christian made some requirement on the way one would conduct his relations

with other people. What too many people do not realize is the simple fact that we are commanded not only to be **peaceful** but to be **peace MAKERS**, which is infinitely more positive. It means, then, to go out into the whole network of human relationships and bring the peace which is within God into those relationships.

Looking now, more closely, at this matter, we can set down a number of specific requirements that are involved in this task of building peaceful personal relations.

Requirements of peaceful relations

Goodwill.—"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). The way of life to which Jesus called us has as its foundation, love. The moral conduct and ethical behavior of the Christian is rooted in love. In more practical terms, it means an attitude of overflowing goodwill. Goodwill controlling one's inner life will rule out at once all forms of intolerance and prejudice. These are two mortal enemies of peaceful human relationships.

To be completely tolerant toward people with whom we must disagree or who are in any way unlike ourselves is difficult, indeed. For people with great convictions it is often especially difficult. Difficult or not, intolerance is out of harmony with the spirit of goodwill. Intolerance is often thought to be an evidence of strong faith; one who is unable to tolerate the ideas of others is one who himself is controlled by very strong convictions. However, looking at it more deeply, we can see that the very opposite is true. The intolerant person is none too sure of his ground, and so he seeks to bolster up his ideas by attitudes of bigotry. The one, however, who is really sure of his ground, lets his convictions stand on their own

feet, knowing that "truth crushed to earth shall rise again."

Not that we should water down our own convictions; for being a Christian in itself means having strong convictions about God, life, and human destiny. Nor does this mean that we should tolerate evil or unrighteousness. We are not for one moment suggesting that we become indifferent to evil and injustice. That may be what some people mean by tolerance, but it is not what the New Testament means. The word "tolerance," while it does not itself appear in the New Testament, comes very close to what Paul meant when he spoke of "forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:2). Tolerance of this type will do much to build peaceful human relationships. It has been the lack of that spirit which has caused so many divisions in the church, even as it did in the days of Paul.

Prejudice, another mortal enemy of peaceful human relations, is akin to intolerance. In prejudice we judge people not on the basis of what they are in their own right or on what they might become, but on the idea, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46). A few people from Nazareth may not have turned out well, and so all the people of Nazareth were herded into that category! We say, "Can any good thing come from the negroes or the Jews, or can any good thing come from Germany or Japan?" The answer to prejudice in our day is the same as it was in the day of Nathanael. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The answer is, "Come and see."

Prejudice is essentially blindness. When a hotel porter refused to take George Washington Carver, the famous negro scientist, up the main elevator of a hotel, all he saw was a black man, not a brilliant scientist, or a gracious spirit, or a humble seeker of the truth which

God reveals in His universe. "Come and see." This tendency to judge people on the basis of class, race, or group, or to harbor resentment in any form does more harm to us than to those against whom we direct our resentment. As another great negro leader, Booker T. Washington, put it: "I have learned this lesson, that I would permit no man, no matter what the color of his skin might be, to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate him."

The most common form of prejudice is race prejudice. The race problem is fraught with dynamite. Few people realize how serious it is and how seriously it may affect the future peace of our society. Whatever may be the solution of the race problem in America, let this fact be as clear as crystal: prejudice of any kind, and race prejudice in particular, is not consistent with the New Testament way of life or with a heart wherein dwells the peace of God.

Reconciliation.—"All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18). To reconcile men to God and to each other, to be peacemakers in all the relationships of life—that is the task of one who has the peace of God within. An unknown Christian of the second century wrote a letter to a friend which is known as the Epistle to Diognetus. In this letter he referred to this ministry of reconciliation. "In a word, what a soul is in the body, this the Christians are in the world. The soul is enclosed in the body, and yet itself holdeth the body together; so Christians are kept in the world, and yet they themselves hold the world together." The prophet Isaiah pictured this same task vividly when he said, "Thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach" (Isa. 58:12).

There are many breaches in human relationships that need to be repaired. The importance of this can

be illustrated by what Jesus said on one occasion: "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." "Agree [which means "come to terms"] with thine adversary [opponent] quickly" (Matt. 5:24).

All this means that we must not go through life with grudges or hurt feelings toward other people. Do not allow resentments to fester in your soul and widen the breach which separates you from your fellow man. As soon as something comes between you and another person, try with all the powers that are within you to understand the other person as well as yourself. Remember that chances are very strong that you are imagining most of the injuries. It was John Wesley who said: "I am a man sent from God to persuade men to put Christ into their relationships."

Persuasion.—It is significant that in dealing with sinful humanity Jesus did not rely upon force, but upon persuasion. He did not compel anyone to be a follower of His against His will. He knew that men would finally be won, not forced, into the way of truth and right. What, for example, was it that finally brought Paul into the Kingdom and made him endure hardship and suffering because of it? His answer is, "For the love of Christ constraineth us" (II Cor. 5:14).

We do well to study carefully the meaning of that word, "constrain." "Love" persuaded him, transformed him, controlled him, and impelled him. His life was so completely won over by the irresistible power of love that he could not help but say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" That is the way men are finally brought to the truth and the right. It is never by the sledge-

hammer method. Someone has said, "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still."

Frank C. Laubach declares that when he first went to the Philippines as a missionary, the natives were hostile to any American or any Christian. They carried fierce-looking weapons which they were prepared to use if the occasion seemed to them to require it. He went there with the idea of loving them, and he did love them and convinced them that he was their friend. He said, on the basis of that, we could win the Japanese people in twenty years or less if we really loved them and went to them as their friends who wanted to help them. Force will never do it, but persuasion will. Force will breed resentment; persuasion in Christian love can win men.

One Sunday morning a bishop was walking down Michigan Boulevard in Chicago on his way to church. Suddenly a well-aimed snowball hit the bishop's black hat and sent it out across the snow. Looking around quickly he saw a small boy, dirty and ragged, running around the corner.

"Boy," shouted the bishop, "come back here." What it was that made the boy obey would be hard to tell, but he did. And the bishop, instead of becoming angry with the boy, said, "My hat furnished you with a first-rate target. Now will you do something for me? I want you to come with me to my Sunday school."

The boy did go to Sunday school and, as time went on, the bishop and the boy became fast friends. Today the boy is Dr. Herman H. Bundesen, who is nationally known as a physician. More important than that, he is a man of deep, religious convictions. The two boys who were with him on the day he threw the snowball are both serving life sentences for murder! That young boy was won to the way of Christ by the persuasive power of

love and friendship. It may not always work out in such a dramatic way, but it is still the only way a person can really lay hold of the things of Christ.

Suffering.—Sometimes, building peaceful personal relations will require of us that we take upon ourselves the yoke of suffering. Of John Wesley it is reported that as he would preach to great crowds in the open air, there would be those that would throw stones at him or hit him with clubs. He never would lose his temper. He would simply wipe the blood from his face and, without so much as a frown, would continue his preaching. He loved his enemies. The peace of God was in him; so he was able to build it into human relations through suffering. It was written of him that he instilled in the English people a new conception of bravery and courage.

Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." One often wonders why it is that we have to endure so little suffering for our faith while the early Christians had to endure so much. Is it true that we are too prone to compromise with our convictions? Are we not too willing to follow the line of least resistance? Perhaps we need that new conception of bravery and courage which John Wesley demonstrated.

To build peaceful personal relations with our friends and all the people with whom we associate, it will require of us that at all times we have an attitude of goodwill that we shall try to come to terms with those with whom we may have some difficulty, that in any case we shall use the methods of persuasion, and that we shall not be afraid if we may have to undergo hardship.

For thought and discussion

1. What is the difference between being "peaceful" and being a "peace maker"? Is it possible to be a peace-maker without having the peace of God within? What

would you say of one who claimed to have the peace of God within, but did nothing to establish it in his personal relations?

2. Why should we show goodwill toward people even though we may not approve of their ways of thinking?
3. Why is it wrong to dislike people simply because they are members of a certain race or a certain nation? (See Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:10, 11; Acts 17:26.)
4. Can you think of people or groups against whom you have a definite prejudice? What are you going to do about it?
5. Have you taken the time to learn reliable facts about groups against whom you have a definite prejudice? See, for example, the pamphlet, **The Jews Today**, by Conrad Hoffmann (Friendship Press, New York, N. Y.).
6. Is it possible to win the Germans and the Japanese to a better way of living and thinking if we hate them and mistreat them?
7. Should we not expect to suffer for our faith? What did Jesus mean when He said we should deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Him? (Matthew 16:24)
8. Read **Heroes of Good Will**, by Allan A. Hunter (Fellowship of Reconciliation, New York, N.Y.), for examples of love overcoming hate.
9. Does it help you to love your enemies if you pray for them? (Matthew 5:44)

WORKING FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD

What kind of a world will we be living in for the next twenty-five or thirty years? Will it be as the past thirty years, a continuous cycle of warfare in which we prepare for, fight, and try to get over one war after another? In our study of history we learn that wars are produced by certain causes. The causes of World War I are now written in the pages of history. In a number of years historians will include the causes of World War II.

The study of history shows us repeatedly that wars do not just happen. There is no such thing as a blind fate which suddenly decrees that we shall have war, and then we proceed to have war. Wars are caused by certain attitudes and policies which men and nations choose to adopt. We live in a universe of cause and effect. Certain causes always produce certain results. It is so in the field of human relations. There are those attitudes and policies which produce wars, and there are other attitudes and policies which make for peace. Again and again, men and nations are in the "valley of decision," in which they are called to choose which way they shall go.

Now in such a decision which involves millions of human lives and determines the kind of moral standards which we shall have for an entire generation, and sends young men out to kill, we cannot think that God could be indifferent to the way men and nations choose to go. He is not indifferent to the policies of the nations. For we believe that God has a "will," a "purpose" for all nations in any period of history, and that it is up to those who have the peace of God within, to help the nations discover what that will is. Therefore, the way of Christ must function in every phase of life, and no part of our collective or private life is outside of the redemptive purpose of God. We believe then, that the God who is the source of all peace, and who makes that peace available to us through Jesus Christ, and who impels us to build peace into our personal relations, places His approval on those attitudes and policies which make for peace, and His disapproval upon those attitudes and policies which make for war.

Too often we are guilty of studying history from a purely secular, materialistic, or selfish view point. We ask, concerning policies about which we read, "Was it clever politics?" "Was it good business?" "What did

we get out of it?" It does not occur to us to consider the more important questions: "Was it in harmony with the teachings of Jesus?" "Did it further the cause of humanity as a whole?" "Was it the will of God?" Until we can learn in our thinking to raise the spiritual and ethical issues involved in national policies, we shall continue to follow after those things which make for war.

We know also that a representative form of government, such as American democracy, rests on the idea that the people of the nation are fit to govern themselves. The people elect "representatives," who are delegated with the responsibility of carrying out the will of the people. However, this system of government breaks down where people are uninformed, uninterested, or will not make their opinions felt either by the vote or by helping to shape public opinion.

The Christian in such a system of government has a double responsibility. First, he is responsible to God to see that His will and purpose is carried out in national policy. That is his first allegiance. The second is like unto it: he is responsible to the society of which he is a part to see that his attitudes and opinions find expression in the affairs of government. That is, the government should know what his Christian opinions are, for minority opinions are also of value in a democracy. In this way the Christians of the world could infuse a new spirit in public life. They could serve as a leavening influence in the whole lump, working silently, and perhaps without notice, nevertheless helping to shape and mould an intelligent and God-conscious public opinion. It is not through boisterous or coercive measures that we are to work; rather, by silently infusing a new spirit in the total range of human life and experience, can we slowly transform the policies and attitudes of our world.

Let no one suppose that this is an easy task. It is a gigantic problem to build a peaceful world, and who can

know when the realization of that hope may be fulfilled. Nevertheless, it is because we believe that the Christian way must function in the whole of life, that we cannot rest at ease until we have given our entire effort in that direction. When the fulfillment of history shall be, and when the Kingdom of God shall be established by the sovereign act of God we cannot know. But until that day, our task is clear: we must work to bring the whole of life under the rule of Christ.

The Christian must always insist on certain, timeless principles to govern the affairs of the nations. The only way to a peaceful world is God's way. Now let us consider some of these principles which should govern the affairs of the nations.

1. The absolute necessity of repentance from wrongdoing. No nations come to the close of this or any war with clean hands. Our hands are stained with the blood of human life. We have followed those attitudes and policies which **cause** wars. The military victory which we have won has been completely overshadowed in the minds of thoughtful Christian people by the grim fact that we, too, were involved in the guilt of this war. This can be said for all the nations of the world, so that all of us stand in need of this simple gospel message of the absolute necessity of repentance from wrongdoing. The gospel has always insisted that there can be no salvation apart from repentance, and that to follow a new and living way, we must look at our past misdeeds with a profound sense of humility and penitence.

It was to another nation that God spoke these words: "If my people . . . shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14). There are a number of things that would direct themselves to the re-birth of a nation. We notice that they were commanded

to turn from their wicked ways. Here are a few facts that came to my attention some time ago which would suggest how much the call to national repentance applies to us. In America there is a check forged every 3½ minutes; a major crime is committed every 22 seconds; one home in four is touched by crime; there are over four million in the army of the lawless; there is one divorce in every six marriages; 70 per cent of all arrests are due to liquor; 628 million dollars is spent each year in commercialized vice. At the time of this writing it is said that crimes of violence have increased 13 per cent in the last hundred days. More money is gambled away in a single day than is spent for the work of the church in an entire year. Some 7,600 homes were questioned, and it was discovered that in over half of these homes they did not even so much as own a copy of the Bible. That is why absolute repentance is necessary as the first step in building a peaceful world.

2. The absolute sovereignty of God. The nations of the world have been operating under the system of the absolute sovereignty of each nation. That is to say, each nation has supreme power and can choose to do just as it wishes. Now in a world of many nations, that spells chaos. That is exactly what has happened. All nations, asserting their absolute sovereignty, have been in conflict with each other.

The gospel has always held to the position of the absolute sovereignty of God. No power in heaven above or the earth beneath, no power here or at the ends of the earth, exceeds the power or the obligation which we have toward God. Other loyalties must take second place to that supreme loyalty to God. The doctrine of the sovereignty of God must be more than an empty phrase; it must be demonstrated in the way we live and in the way we order the affairs of our nation.

In the task of building a lasting peace, this will mean

that the nations of the world will have to reduce some of their sovereignty and power, not only for the sake of one nation but for the sake of humanity. The supreme power in the world is not the state. The state is responsible not only to the people but to God whose sovereignty is above all and over all. As Christian citizens in a democracy we should imbue our statesmen with the idea that we as a nation must be willing to give up some things for a peaceful world. We should not expect to have peace among the nations without any cost whatsoever and at no sacrifice to ourselves. When we think of the staggering costs of war in terms of lives, money, and resources, and the tremendous sacrifices which we have been called upon to make during war, why is it that we expect to have peace with no cost whatsoever? Let the Christians inform their national leaders that we want to reduce some of our power for the sake of a Higher Power and a Higher Good. If we really want a peaceful world, national sovereignty must go.

3. The stewardship of material possessions. All that we have in the way of wealth and property is not really our own to control in our own interests, or to exploit for selfish purposes. All the material goods of life are owned by God and are given to us as trust. We are accountable to Him; if we have used them selfishly, we are under His judgment; if we have used them in the service of mankind, we have been accounted as good stewards.

Translating this into the bewildering task of building a peaceful world, it means that every nation has a right to some degree of economic security. This world cannot live half overfed and half underfed. We shall have neither a Christian world nor a peaceful world where a few nations control the world's markets, raw materials, and wealth. It is encouraging that this principle is being recognized more and more by our responsible statesmen. Said one of them a year or two ago, "No nation has the

God-given right to exploit other nations." "We ourselves in the United States are no more a master race than the Nazis."

Then we have yet another responsibility at this time when hunger stalks the earth and mass starvation threatens whole populations. For instance, we are told that there are sections in Europe where no child born in the year 1945 lived to see the coming of the year 1946. When people die by the millions of starvation, we see at once where our responsibility lies as good stewards of the material things which God has entrusted to us. There will never be a peaceful world where there are whole populations starving. The Christian doctrine of the stewardship of all possessions must have a new importance in our economic life of the future.

In listening to people express themselves on public questions, one is often surprised to observe that Christian convictions are conspicuous by their absence. For example, when people express their opinions as to what ought to be done with Germany or Japan now that war is over, one can see only too clearly that even among church people, Christian convictions do not govern their attitudes. So we emphasize the importance of having attitudes that are Christian.

4. A world-wide fellowship in Christ. We hear talk these days about "one world." The old isolations, we are told, are gone forever. We must begin to think in world terms and a community of nations. Due to the advancement of scientific invention and the development of the means of communication, this world has become technically one world. Our relationships in the world of nations are far more frequent and complex than they ever were before. At the same time the world is trying to move together politically. It is trying to form some world council to serve to unite the nations for the common good and to insure a greater measure of peace. This is all very

necessary and important. The truth of the matter is that this world can never successfully move together politically unless it also moves together spiritually. We believe that we must do all that we can to insure a Christian solution to the international problems which confront the world. There is no excuse for indifference to the great, ethical issues involved in the life of the nations.

It must finally be said with all the emphasis at our command, that we must at the same time win the world to Jesus Christ. Only in Christ can this broken world become truly one world. In Him we have a world-wide Savior, a world-wide loyalty, and a world-wide fellowship which impel us to a world-wide task. Today we can see as never before, how Christian missions can become the undergirding of a peaceful world. As the world moves together spiritually, it can, indeed, move together politically.

Twenty years ago John R. Mott said: "We must send 10,000 missionaries with Bibles into Japan, or we shall have to send 10,000 soldiers there with bayonets." Recently General Douglas MacArthur said, as he took up his work with the Japanese: "The problem basically is theological and involves the improvement of human character." These statements ought to make us think. They ought to make us feel the tremendous urgency of strong mission work in the churches throughout the world. We cannot relax our efforts in this most important task until the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. This obligation rests upon us until that day comes for which Paul so fondly prayed: "till every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

It should be clear to us by now, that if we are to build a peaceful world, we must have statesmen who are themselves Christians and who believe, moreover, that God has a Will for their nation, and only that which is in harmony with that Will can permanently succeed. Under-

girding the task of Christian statesmanship is, as we have suggested, the fundamental Christian task of evangelism and missions. People must be won to Christ and his way of life, and must be made to realize their responsibilities in the affairs of the world.

5. Christian Service. In addition to Christian attitudes and Christian missions, there is also the area of Christian service, which, too, is a part of building a peaceful world. Engaging in specific acts of service in areas of great need we can light candles which no darkness can put out. A Chinese proverb says, "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." Lives here and there which accept the challenge of Christian service can do more than a little to add to the solution of the world's problem.

Today, in a world that is still bleeding from the wounds of global war and mass starvation, many young people are answering the challenge of foreign relief service. It is because they believe that we are stewards of the material things of life; they are impelled by the peace of God in their hearts to go forth on a great venture of Christian service.

In a previous section the various service projects engaged in by men in Civilian Public Service were described and summarized. There were the mental hospital units, public health projects, smoke-jumpers units, "guinea pig" experiments, to mention only a few. These are areas of great need in our own country in which young people could answer in definite Christian service.

These projects were engaged in because of the Selective Service Act which required work of national importance of those who could not partake in military training. However, many church leaders feel that similar projects should be continued in peacetime, when our young people can voluntarily give their services to some area of

need. The world, even in peacetime, is filled with suffering due to ignorance and sin. The church is going to extend a call to its young people to give not only of their money or sympathy but of their time, that they can go personally to the places of need and bear witness to a better way.

With a church filled with young people who will give six weeks, six months, or even a year or two of their time to go to places of need at home or abroad in the service of the church and humanity, the church will become a vital power in the world today. The contributions such young people would make in creating understanding and good will can never be measured.

Will the young people of this generation answer such a challenge? Will they say "Because the peace of God has come into my life through Christ, I cannot take human life; but I will dedicate my life to build love and understanding into all the relations of life"?

For thought and discussion

1. Would you call America a Christian nation? In what way is this true of America? In what way is it not true?
2. In what way do we best show our patriotism: by giving the government blind obedience, or by obeying first the will of God?
3. In what ways are we responsible for the un-Christian policies of our government?
4. Is it enough to refuse to go to war? Should we not also do everything possible to prevent war itself?
5. What should govern our attitudes on public questions?
6. In what ways can we work for a peaceful world?
7. What relation does the cause of foreign missions have to the building of a peaceful world?
8. Are there some areas of need in or near your community where young people could serve "in the name of Christ"?

A Short Bibliography on Peace Principles Mennonite Sources

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- I. Harold S. Bender, **Mennonite Origins in Europe**
- II. C. Henry Smith, **Mennonites in America**
- III. Edward Yoder, **Our Mennonite Heritage**
- IV. Edmund G. Kaufman, **Our Mission As a Church of Christ**
- V. Guy F. Hershberger, **Christian Relationships to State and Community**

VI. P. C. Hiebert, **Life and Service in the Kingdom of God**

Any or all of the above series are available at the Mennonite Book Store, Newton, Kansas

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- C. Henry Smith, **The Coming of the Russian Mennonites.** Newton, Kansas: The Mennonite Book Store.

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- G. H. C. Macgregor, **The New Testament Basis on Pacifism.** Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Scotch Presbyterian writer who has the best all-around book on this subject. Perhaps a bit more liberal than most Mennonites but a definite "must" book, especially in grappling with traditional militarist proof texts like Romans 13:1. (British publisher is James Clarke and Company.)

- J. R. Coates, **War—What Does the Bible Say?** Macmillan Company.

In the hands of a mature Bible student, this little book (61 pp.) is very helpful, especially on the Old Testament problem. Coates is not as outspoken a non-resistant as Macgregor.

- Percy Harthill, **Into the Way of Peace.** Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Outstanding pacifist ministers of the Church of England write on such varied topics as: "The Suffering Servant of the Lord" and "Pacifism in the Parish." The texture of thought is not altogether in line with our tradition, but these men are reverent Christians with an English background.

- C. J. Cadoux, **The Early Christian Attitude to War.** George Allen and Unwin London.

The definitive work on non-resistance in the apostolic church. For the attitude on the apostolic church on all other ethical questions like sex, property, slavery, etc., see his larger book, **The Early Church and the World**; publishers: T. and T. Clark, London. On historical background these two books are the best available. Excellent for apologetics of non-resistance.

- G. J. Heering, **The Fall of Christianity.** Fellowship Publications.

An English translation written by a Dutch Christian who believes that when the church embraced war it fell into corruption. A very profound book with material on the Biblical, historical, and theological problems.

- Umphrey Lee, **The Historic Church and Modern Pacifism.** Abingdon-Cokesbury.

A well-known Methodist scholar deals with the early church issue in order to show that modern pacifism is very different from that of the apostolic church. Modern pacifism, he argues, is less thoroughgoing; it is urged as a worldly strategy, and it is friendly to political action. This argument needs to be faced very frankly by non-resistant Christians, especially those committed to liberal pacifism.

Rufus Bowman, **Seventy Times Seven**. Elgin, Illinois: Brethren Publishing House.

Presents the viewpoint of the Church of the Brethren as it re-thinks its non-resistant heritage. It is not a great book and is unconvincing at points. It is highly recommended for the similarity it reveals with the problems in the General Conference. See also his historical study, **The Church of the Brethren and War 1708-1941**. Very valuable.

The Journal of John Woolman. Everyman's Library. E. P. Dutton.

America's greatest Quaker, who lived in New Jersey 200 years ago. A simple diary, describing how Christian conscience functions. This book mainly deals with the conscience against slavery (though it includes war), but it shows how we have to witness face to face, person to person. Win them one by one in Christian love. The basic Quaker work, however, is Margaret Hirst, **The Quakers in Peace and War**. See also the small pamphlet, **Sources of the Quaker Peace Testimony**, by Howard Brinton, published by Pendle Hill, Wallingford, Pennsylvania.

Walter W. Van Kirk, **A Christian Global Strategy**. Willett and Clark

A forceful presentation of what one might call the liberal Protestant viewpoint, embracing political action for a world government as the answer to recurring global wars.

Appendix

APPENDIX A

A STATEMENT OF THE POSITION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE MENNONITE CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

On peace, War, Military Service, and Patriotism as approved by the General Conference at Souderton, Pa.,

August 17-22, 1941

Introduction

In view of the present troubled state of world affairs, and the present European conflict which threatens the peace of the world, we as representatives of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America, desire to set forth in the following statement our faith and convictions concerning participation in war, military service and our concept of patriotism.

In stating our convictions, we establish no new doctrine among us, but merely reiterate an age-old faith of the church which has been held precious by our forefathers from the time that the church was founded in Reformation times in Switzerland (1525) and in Holland (1533), and which we have set forth on a number of former occasions since our settlement in America.

Our position on peace and war

1. Our peace principles are rooted in Christ and His Word, and in His strength alone do we hope to live a life of peace and love toward all men.

2. As followers of Christ, the Prince of Peace, we believe His Gospel to be a gospel of peace, requiring us

as His disciples to be at peace with all men, to live a life of love and good will, even toward our enemies, and to renounce the use of force and violence in settling our problems as contrary to the spirit of our Saviour and Master. These principles we derive from such Scripture teachings as: "Love your enemies;" "Do good to them that hate you;" "Resist not evil;" "My Kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight;" "Put up thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword;" "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves;" "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head;" "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good;" "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle to all men;" "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal;" "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;" "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing;" "If a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar . . . And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also;" and other similar passages, as well as from the whole tenor of the Gospel.

3. Peace within the heart as well as toward others is a fruit of the Gospel. Therefore, he who professes peace must at all times and in all relations with his fellow men live a life that is in harmony with the Gospel.

4. We believe that war is altogether contrary to the teaching and spirit of Christ and the Gospel; that therefore war is sin, as is all manner of carnal strife; that it is wrong in spirit and method as well as in purpose, and destructive in its results. Therefore, if we profess the principle of peace and nevertheless engage in warfare and strife, we

as Christians become guilty of sin and fall under the condemnation of Christ the righteous judge.

Our concept of patriotism

As members of an historic peace church we love our country and sincerely work for its highest welfare. True love for our country does not mean hatred of others. It is our conviction that only the application of the principles of peace, love, justice, liberty, and international good will makes for the highest welfare of our country; and the highest welfare of our country must harmonize with the highest welfare of humanity everywhere. Our faith is in security through love, protection through good will; and for such we are willing to make the necessary sacrifice. We are opposed to war as a method of settling disputes because it is un-Christian, destructive of our highest values, and sows the seed of future wars. We feel that we are true patriots because we build upon the eternal principles of right which are the only foundation of stable government in our world community.

Our position on military service

In the light of the above principles of the Scriptures, we are constrained as followers of Christ to abstain from all military service and all direct means in support of war. Specifically, our position entails the following commitments:

1. We can have no part in carnal warfare or conflict between nations, nor in strife between classes, groups or individuals. We believe that this means that we cannot bear arms personally nor directly aid those who do so, and that, as a consequence, we cannot accept service under the military arm of the government, whether it be combatant or non-combatant, which ultimately causes us to be responsible for the destruction of the life, health, and property of our fellow men. This applies to all wars whether they be designated defensive or offensive.

2. On the same grounds consistency requires that we do not serve during war time under civil organizations temporarily allied with the military in the prosecution of the war, which, under military orders, become a part of the war system in effect, even in method and spirit, however beneficial their peacetime activities may be.

3. We feel that we cannot consistently take part in the financing of war operations through the purchase of war bonds, and we are very sensitive to making voluntary contributions to organizations or activities which may indirectly make us supporters of war and the military program.

Instead, we urge that we make our contributions to civilian and church organizations which are directly engaged in administering relief to those in distress, or to other constructive enterprises.

4. We cannot knowingly sanction the participation in the manufacture of munitions and weapons of war whether in peace time or in war time.

5. We can have no part in military training in schools and colleges or in any other form of peacetime preparation for service as part of the war system.

6. We ought carefully to abstain from any agitation, propaganda or activity that tends to promote, ill-will or hatred among nations, which leads to war, but rather endeavor to foster good will and respect for all nations, peoples and races, being careful to observe a spirit of sincere neutrality when cases of war and conflict arise.

7. We ought not to seek to make a profit of war and war-time inflation, which would mean profiting from the shedding of the blood of our fellow men. If, however during war time, excess profits do come into our hands, such profits should be conscientiously devoted to charitable purposes, such as the bringing of relief to the needy and the spreading of the Gospel of peace and love.

Our substitution for war

In so far as our convictions are based on religious principles, in which we hold that war is contrary to the spirit, life and teachings of Christ, who renounced the weapons of worldly passion and used methods of love and self-sacrifice in their place, we therefore express our willingness, as a substitute for carnal warfare, at all times to aid in the relief of those who are in need, distress or suffering, regardless of the danger in which we may be placed in bringing such relief, or of the cost which may be involved in the same. We are also willing to render such services as housing, road making, farming, forestry, hospitalization, and recreational work during time of peace as well as during time of war. Whenever we render such service it shall always be our purpose to spread the Gospel of Christ by word as well as deed.

An expression of appreciation

We want to express our appreciation to the governments of the United States and Canada to which we are grateful in that they have recognized our desire to exercise the freedom of our conscience in not bearing arms, or taking any part of service in the military machine, and that, in lieu of such service, we render service of national importance to our country and relief to those who are in need, distress or suffering at home or abroad in the war zones. We also pray that the blessing and guidance of a beneficent God may continue to rest upon these nations, their institutions, and their people.

APPENDIX B

Principles of CHRISTIAN PEACE AND PATRIOTISM* with Scriptural Basis

Statement of position

We, Friends, Brethren and Mennonites, assembled in the Conference of the Historic Peace Churches at Newton, Kansas, October 31, to November 2, 1935, remembering in gratitude to God the historic war testimony of our churches, desire, in absolute renunciation of war for the wholehearted practice of peace and love, to state the basis of our common position.

1. Our peace principles are rooted in Christ and His Word.

2. Through Jesus Christ, who lived among men as the incarnation of the God of love, we become partakers of the spirit and character of our Lord, and thereby are constrained to love all men, even our enemies.

3. Christ has led us to see the value of human life and personalities, and the possibilities in all men, who by spiritual rebirth from above may become sons of God.

4. The spirit of sacrificial service, love, and goodwill promotes the highest well-being and development of men and society, whereas the spirit of hatred, ill will, and fear destroys, as has been demonstrated repeatedly in human experience.

5. Since good alone can overcome evil, the use of violence must be abandoned.

6. War is sin. It is the complete denial of the Christian spirit of love and all that Christ stands for. It is wrong in spirit and method, and destructive in results. Therefore, we cannot support or engage in any war or conflict between nations, classes, or groups.

*As outlined by representatives of Brethren, Friends, and Mennonites assembled at Newton, Kansas, Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, 1935.

7. Our supreme allegiance is to God. We cannot violate it by a lesser loyalty, but we are determined to follow Christ in all things. In this determination we believe we are serving the interests of our country, and are truly loyal to our nation.

8. Under God we commit ourselves to set forth in the true way of life this statement of position and assume the obligations and sacrifices attending its practice.

Our concept of patriotism

As members of the historic peace churches we love our country and sincerely work for its highest welfare. True love for our country does not mean a hatred of others. It is our conviction that only the application of the principles of peace, love, justice, liberty and international goodwill will make for the highest welfare of our country; and the highest welfare of our country must harmonize with the highest welfare of humanity everywhere. Our faith is in security through love, protection through goodwill; and for such we are willing to make the necessary sacrifice. We are opposed to war as a method of settling disputes because it is unchristian, destructive of our highest values and sows the seed of future wars. We feel that we are true patriots because we build upon the eternal principles of right which are the only foundation of stable government in our world community.

APPENDIX C

THE SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR PEACE CONVICTIONS

Thou shalt not kill. Ex. 20:13

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue
it. Ps. 34:14.

Say not thou, I will recompence evil; but wait on the
Lord, and he shall save thee. Prov. 20:22.

Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I
will render to the man according to his work. Prov. 24:29.

If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and
if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. Prov. 25-21-22.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called
the children of God. Matt. 5:9.

But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil: but
whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him
the other also. Matt. 5:39, R.V.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take
away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. Matt. 5:40.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them
that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray
for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.
Matt. 5:44.

But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into
another. Matt. 10:23a.

Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword
into his place: for all they that take the sword shall per-
ish with the sword. Matt. 26:52.

But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father
which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. Mark 11:26.

Know ye not what manner of spirit ye are of. For
the Son of man is not come to destroy lives, but to save
them. Lk. 9:55b-56a.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his
own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have

chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John 15:19.

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. John 18:36.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29.

Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rom. 12:14.

Recompence no man evil for evil. Rom. 12:17a.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. 12:18

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. 12:19.

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Rom. 12:20.

Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12:21.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same - - - Rom. 13:1-3, ff.

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace. Rom. 14:19a.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thru God to the pulling down of strongholds. 2 Cor. 10:3-4.

But the fruit of the spirit is - - - peace - - - Gal. 5:22.
For our citizenship is in heaven. Phil. 3:20, R.V.
And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

Col. 3:15a.

Be at peace among yourselves. 1 Thess. 5:13b.

The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be
gentle unto all men. 1 Tim. 2:24a.

Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and
powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good
work. Tit. 3:1.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and
sharper than any twoedged sword. Heb. 4:12a.

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord. Heb. 12:14.

The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man
shall do unto me. Heb. 13:6.

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one
to come. Heb. 13:14.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of
them that make peace. Jas. 3:18.

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the
Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or to
governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the pun-
ishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do
well. 1 Pet. 2:13-14.

For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience to-
ward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what
glory is it, if, when ye are buffeted for your faults, ye
shall take it patiently? But if, when ye do well, and suf-
fer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with
God. 1 Pet. 2:19-20.

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ
also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should
follow his steps: - - - who, when he was reviled, reviled

not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

1 Pet. 2:21, 23.

And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good.

1 Pet. 3:13.

Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

1 John 3:15.

